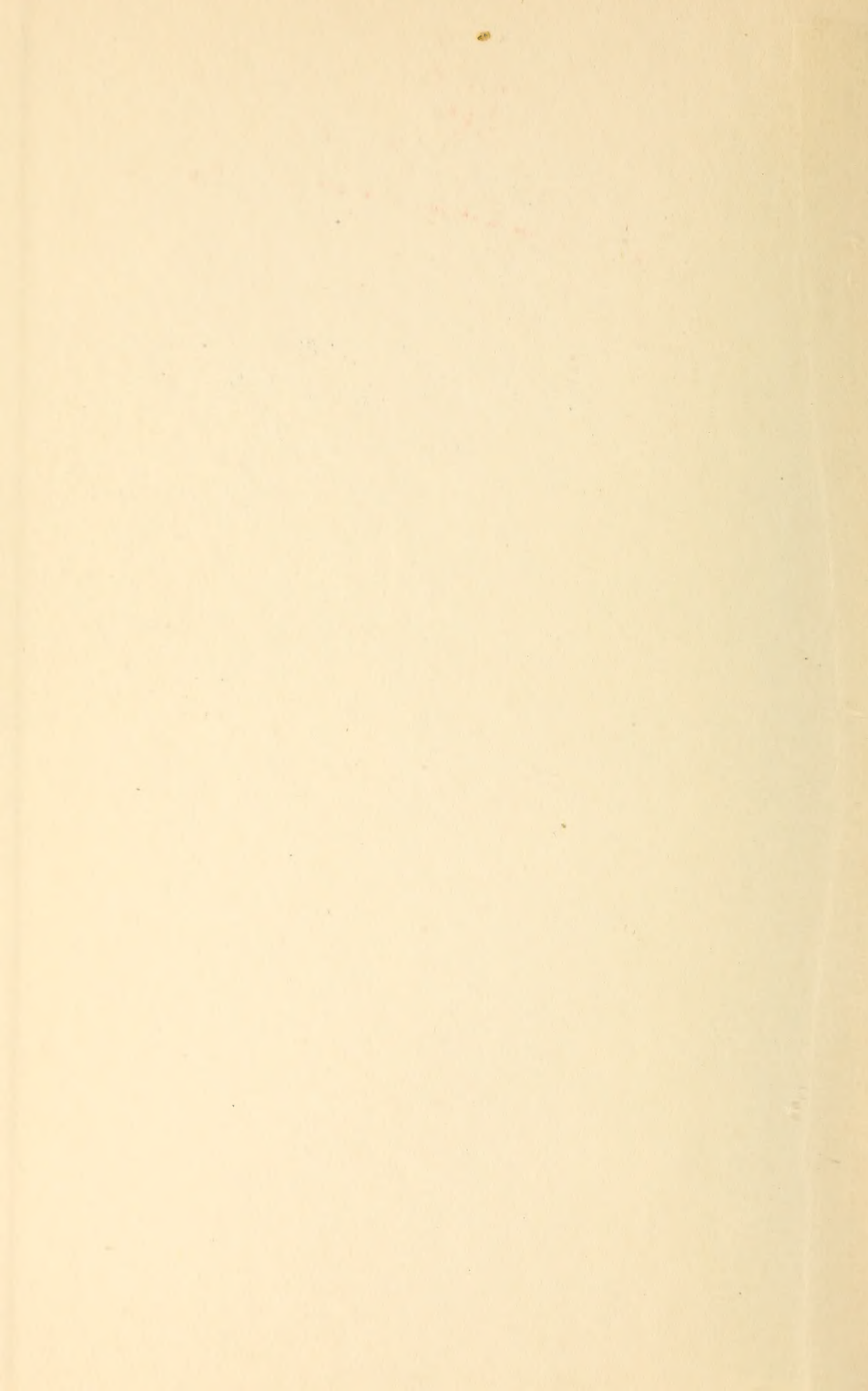


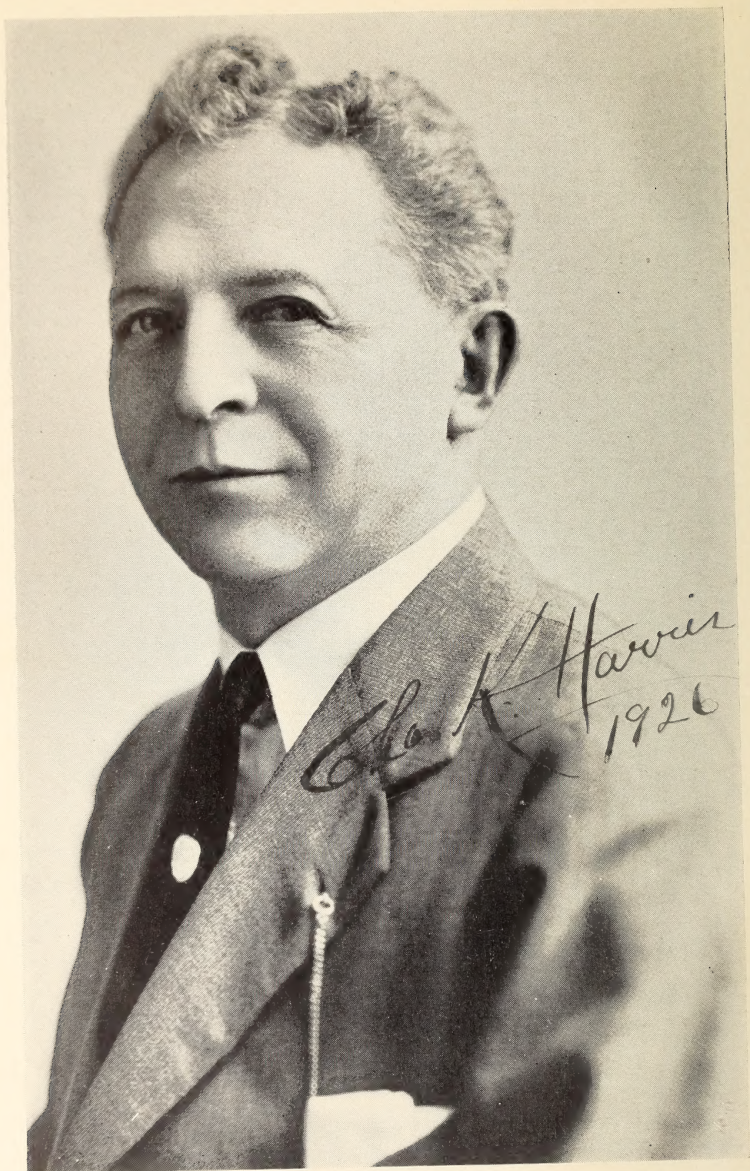
AFTER THE BALL

CHARLES K. HARRIS

1926

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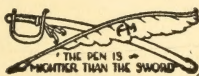
Forty Years of Melody



An Autobiography

By

CHARLES K. HARRIS



NEW YORK

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1926

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CONTENTS

CHAPTER	PAGE
I HOW IT ALL HAPPENED	1
II REAPING THE FIRST FRUITS	26
III AFTER THE BALL	50
IV A SURPRISE FOR MOTHER	75
V GOOD FRIENDS IN SHOWLAND	91
VI FOR OLD TIME'S SAKE	114
VII MORE SONG-HITS	140
VIII THE RISE OF THE ILLUSTRATED SONG	176
IX ACTORS, PLUGGERS, AND TIN PAN ALLEY	196
X ADELINA PATTI	220
XI MUSICAL COMEDIES	244
XII OSCAR HAMMERSTEIN	255
XIII WRITING SCENARIOS	262
XIV THEODORE ROOSEVELT	273
XV THE COPYRIGHT BILLS	281
XVI PLUGGING MY SHOWS AND OTHER MATTERS	299
XVII A FEW NOTABLES	310
XVIII A FEW INCIDENTS	325
XIX SHOP-TALK	341
XX PAST, PRESENT AND FUTURE	365
MY OWN SONGS	373



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ILLUSTRATIONS

Charles K. Harris, 1926	<i>Frontispiece</i>
Nate Salsbury as a tramp	<i>facing page 8</i>
Eddie Foy	32
<i>After the Ball</i> , original lyrics	58
Charles K. Harris, at the time he wrote <i>After the Ball</i> .	66
Sadie Cushman	68
Irene Franklin	68
Adah Richmond	68
Annie Whitney	68
James Aldrich Libby	72
Charles K. Harris, age 7, and his mother	84
Nora Bayes	128
Lydia Barry	128
DeForrests dancing to <i>After the Ball</i>	128
Caroline Hull	128
Mrs. Charles K. Harris and daughter Ethel (1898) . .	184
James J. Corbett	198
Maude Adams	208
John Drew	208
Oscar Hammerstein	208
Reginald DeKoven	208
Eleanor Robson (Mrs. August Belmont)	208
David Warfield	208
The Shubert Brothers	222
Martin Beck	222

Illustrations

Gustav Luders	222
Victor Herbert	246
Committee of Authors and Composers, 1924	292
Lew Fields	332
Jacob Litt	332
J. P. Sousa	332
Joseph Weber	332

MUSIC SCORES

<i>After the Ball</i>	58
<i>For Old Time's Sake</i>	119
<i>'Mid the Green Fields of Virginia</i>	168
<i>Hello, Central, Give Me Heaven</i>	173
<i>The Last Farewell</i>	224
<i>Iola</i>	367

AFTER THE BALL

CHAPTER I

How It All Happened

I Learn to Play the Banjo—My First Songs—Nat C. Goodwin in The Skating Rink—Early Trials and Tribulations—A Song for Irene Franklin—Publishing my First Song—My First Royalties.

FORTY years ago, when I was eighteen, it never dawned upon me that I should ever mention Poughkeepsie, New York, as my birthplace. When I was a year old our family moved to a small lumber town called East Saginaw, Michigan. There was quite a family of us—father, mother, five sisters, and four brothers. It must have been a hard task, now that I look back upon it, for my father to feed his flock from the income of a small general store and occasional purchases of skins from the Indians. However, we children were all sent to school, and grew up strong and healthy.

We lived on Water Street, close by the Saginaw River. Adjoining my father's store was Stauber's Hotel, where visiting actors stopped while in town. Their rehearsals were conducted in the hotel yard, which was separated from our back yard by a wooden fence. We children often gazed in awe at the actors

After the Ball

rehearsing in the yard. One of the entertainers during that period was Billy Carter, a banjo player of extraordinary skill. I would watch him for hours at practice, and how I yearned to play that instrument!

At that time it seemed to me that no nobler profession existed than that of a banjo player. I dare say there are few of us who during our fanciful childhood failed to cherish some longing for what we wanted to do when we reached manhood. Children, when asked about their ambitions for the future, have often expressed a desire of becoming policemen, firemen, locomotive engineers, and even President of this country; I, being less celestial in my childhood, adopted the career of a banjo player. What distinguished me from the other children is that years afterward, as will presently be shown, I actually realized my ambition by rising to the lofty heights of a banjo player, whereas most children on attaining their majority have given up their youthful ambitions.

In those days there were no music stores in Saginaw and consequently no banjos could be purchased there. I conceived the idea of making one out of a flat tin oyster can and part of an old broom handle. I unwound the wire which held the broom together and, making some wooden keys, strung it up. In a rather crude way, I was soon strumming a tune.

Being engrossed one afternoon in playing a tune

How It All Happened

upon my improvised banjo, I failed to notice Bill Carter and other actors looking on in surprise and amazement. When I was through humming the tune a round of applause greeted me; and, looking up, I was startled to see an audience. I immediately started to run away, but was called back by Carter, who said: "Come here, sonny; let's look at that newfangled instrument." I handed it to him. He looked at it curiously, with a smile on his lips.

"Well, well," he said, "you are certainly a wonder. A boy that can turn out an instrument like this is deserving of a real banjo. I have an old one in my trunk which is out of use. I will fix it up for you and teach you some of the chords tomorrow morning; but you will have to give me this instrument of yours in return for mine."

His offer made me speechless. It was too good to be true.

Sure enough, the morning after, Carter presented me with an old-time banjo, all newly strung. He taught me several chords, just enough to accompany myself when I sang a song.

"Now, kid," said he, "when you save up enough money buy a George C. Dobson Banjo Book, that contains a chart showing where the notes belong upon the neck of the banjo and the position of your fingers on the instrument. When I come back here next season I hope you will be a first-class banjo player."

After the Ball

My chum at that time was little George Bickel, who many years later became famous in vaudeville, with his partner, Harry Watson, under the team name of Bickel & Watson. George Bickel's ambition in those days was to become a band and orchestra leader. He took up the cornet and violin and urged me to do likewise; but my heart was set on being a banjo player and nothing could swerve me from my purpose.

Dear old days! How times have changed! To-day George Bickel is one of the leading comedians on Broadway; his partner, Watson, is one of the leading comedy actors in moving pictures and on the stage; while I, instead of being a banjoist in vaudeville, drifted into the song-writing and music-publishing business.

I remember one day in Saginaw how anxious George and I were to see the show at Smith's Variety, the only variety theater in our town. Not having the twenty-five cents' admission, we carried a banner, which in those days consisted of four sides made of canvas, with the names of the artists painted on them and a candle in the center to illumine the names at night. Instead of carrying the banners through the streets, however, George and I sneaked over to my back yard, where we sat from seven until eight in the evening. We then walked calmly back to the theater, placed the banners in the lobby and were admitted to the gallery, where we sat enthralled, un-

How It All Happened

known to our parents, who thought us fast asleep at home.

In those days the show opened with a circle of men and women, similar to a minstrel performance. Primrose and West were end men; Dan Howe, interlocutor, or middle man; the Foy Sisters, Bertha and Ida, singers. West sang *Shoo Fly, Don't Bother Me*, while Bertha Foy sang *Won't You Love Me, Molly Darling?* These were the songs in vogue at the time. The first part would always end with a shakedown dance by every performer in the opening circle. In the olio to follow were such acts as Schoolcraft and Coe, Scanlon and Cronin,—incidentally, Scanlon starred for many years in musical comedies—the older Pat Rooney, in his songs and dances, and J. K. Emmett, the charming singer. The performance would invariably close with either *Oliver Twist* or a musical act entitled *Black-Eyed Susan*, given by the entire cast.

There was also one legitimate theater in Saginaw, the Academy of Music, presided over by a namesake of the famous Kentucky statesman, Henry Clay. There, for the sum of twenty-five cents a night, I was engaged as usher. The dramas I saw during that period have always remained indelible in my memory. Some of the popular plays and performers then in vogue were Buffalo Bill in the "Scout's Revenge"; Frank Mayo in "Davy Crockett"; Janau-

After the Ball

schek in "Bleak House"; Kate Claxton and Charles Stevenson in "The Two Orphans." What I enjoyed most was Nate Salsbury's Troubadours, with John Webster as the leading comedian, and Nellie McHenry as the leading soubrette. The big song hit, including a dozen encore choruses on popular topics of the day and entitled *We'll Take It In*, was sung by Miss McHenry. The chorus ran somewhat as follows:

We'll take it in, we'll take it out,
That's just what we will do;
We'll take it in, we'll take it out,
And see the whole thing through.

The audience roared with delight. This was followed by Nate Salsbury, dressed as a tramp, who rendered a recitation called *The Tramp*. Although I have never heard it since, I can still recall the words, somewhat to this effect:

Come, let me sit down a moment, a stone's got into my shoe;

Now, don't begin a-cussin', I ain't done nothing to you.

I'm a tramp—well, what of it? Folks say we're no good;

But tramps got to live, I reckon, though people don't think we should.

Once I was young and handsome, and had plenty of cash and clothes.

That was before I tipped and gin got into my nose.

How It All Happened

I had a daughter, Nellie; she was just sixteen.
An' she was the purtiest creature the valley had ever seen.

Beaus? Why, she had a dozen; had 'em from near and
far;

But they was mostly country chaps, none of 'em suited
her.

There was a city stranger, young, handsome and tall—
Damn him, I wish I had him strangled against that wall!

He was the man for Nellie—she didn't know no ill;
Mother tried to stop it, but you know a young gal's will.
Well, it's the same old story, many of you will say.
He was a soft-tongued devil and got her to run away.

It was only a month after, I heard of the poor young
thing;

He had gone away and left her without a wedding ring.
Back to her home they brought her, back to her mother's
side;

Full of disgrace and horror, she knelt at my feet and died.

Frantic with shame and horror, her mother began to sink;
Dead in less than a fortnight—that's when I took to
drink.

Come, give me a glass, stranger, and I'll be on my way;
An' I'll tramp till I find that scoundrel, yes, if it takes till
judgment day.

What a sensation this recitation made in those
days!

During the winter vacation I secured a job as a

After the Ball

bell hop in the Bancroft House, the leading hotel of the town. One of my duties was to build wood fires in the grates of the guests' rooms. On a particularly cold morning the clerk ordered me to start a fire in the room of an actor who complained of chilliness. I scampered up with a bundle of wood under my arm, knocked at the door of the room, and was bidden to enter. The occupant was still in bed. I started the fire and soon the chill was gone.

The occupant then sat up in bed and asked me, in a kind and gentle voice, if I would not like to attend the opening of his performance that night at the Academy of Music. I told him that I ushered there evenings, but that a pass for my father and mother would suit me. He immediately made it out and I thanked him.

The next morning, when I started the fire in his room again, he asked how I had enjoyed the performance. I told him I liked it better than Buffalo Bill's play and that he was a much better actor. He appeared to be very much delighted with my reply. The play in question was "Rip Van Winkle" and the actor was the famous Joseph Jefferson.

We remained in Saginaw until I graduated from the public schools, at the age of fourteen. We then moved to Milwaukee, Wisconsin, a city of about 60,000 inhabitants in those days.

By that time I had obtained a George C. Dobson



Nate Salsbury as a tramp

How It All Happened

Banjo Book. Having mastered its contents thoroughly, I decided to teach others. Accordingly, I hung out a shingle reading: Prof. Charles K. Harris, Banjo Teacher. This had come about without my knowing one note from another, but solely through my mastering the position of the fingers upon the instrument, practiced over and over again, so that one could recognize the melody which followed. Those were mostly melodies of old-time songs, such as *Old Folks at Home*, *Dixie*, *Massa's in the Cold, Cold Ground*, and so on. It finally came about that I thoroughly absorbed the George C. Dobson Banjo Book and could play its contents from memory.

I got many engagements to play the banjo and even sing at amateur entertainments, where I always received the munificent sum of five dollars a night.

By this time my fame as a teacher of the banjo had spread in the vicinity where I lived. Whenever a local entertainment was got up, I would invariably be called in to rehearse the singers, choose the songs, and suggest the performance. On one of these occasions a small organization known as the Phoenix Club had arranged an entertainment, and, as usual, I was called in to lend a hand in rehearsing the performance. It seemed that the songs I had suggested at previous entertainments or minstrel shows had become monotonous to the people. We were at a loss

After the Ball

where we could procure new songs. It must be borne in mind that song writers in those days were far less prolific than they are nowadays.

Returning to the rehearsal of the Phœnix Club, I suggested to the entertainment committee that I felt capable of writing the words and music for four songs. They laughed at me in a good-natured way—much in the same fashion that society laughs at the initial attempts of all embryo painters and artists. I succeeded in persuading the committee to postpone the rehearsals for a week, and, undeterred by any discouragement, stayed home every night and wrote the words and music for four songs. As I remember, they were: *Ah, There, Stay There; If I Were the Chief of Police; Bake That Matzoth Pie*, and *I Heard Her Voice Again*. The last ballad was subsequently published, but no royalties accruing from it ever found their way into my pocket.

At one of the entertainments where I played I met a chap of about my age named Charles Horwitz. Possessing a remarkably fine voice, he often gave Shakspearean readings after business hours, being then a bookkeeper for the Milwaukee Chair Company. The height of his ambition at that time was to become such a Shakspearean actor as Booth and Barrett. He possessed all the earmarks of realizing his ambition.

In Milwaukee one night during the 80's we both attended a performance at the Grand Opera House,

How It All Happened

now known as Pabst's Theater, where Nat C. Goodwin was appearing in a play with music, called "The Skating Rink." Perched up in the gallery, Horwitz and I listened to the songs and imitations given by the famous Goodwin. Somehow or other, the songs did not seem to fit the situations.

I mentioned it to Horwitz, who said: "I think it would be a good thing if you and I would write him a song."

"I will write the music," said I, "if you will write the lyric."

The next evening Horwitz came to my home with a lyric entitled, *Since Maggie Learned to Skate*. I hummed a melody which I thought would fit the words, and in a short time the song was completed, the chorus of which I still remember:

Take me to the roller rink, won't you, daddy dear?
Let me roll upon the floor, it makes me feel so queer.
Give me a quarter, pa, me and Sister Kate.
That's the cry I always hear since Maggie learned to skate.

Early Tuesday morning Horwitz and I walked to the Plankinton House, the leading hotel in Milwaukee at that time, where Goodwin was stopping. When we were ushered up to his room, we announced ourselves as song writers. I shall never forget that morning; the scene is very fresh in my memory now as I write. There was the jovial Goodwin sitting in

After the Ball

his pajamas before a fire in the grate; on a table beside him was his breakfast, while in one corner of the room stood an old square piano.

Looking us over with a twinkle in his eyes, he repeated, "Song writers, hey? What songs did you ever write?"

"A great many," said I nervously.

"Well, there's the piano; sing us one of your wonderful songs. I have nothing but time on my hands this morning, so go ahead and shoot."

Fortunately, I had learned to play the piano by ear. I sat down with the newly written song before me, while Horwitz, standing beside me, sang it to my playing. He sang it as if his very life depended upon it. Think what an honor it meant to two struggling young boys to have the famous Goodwin sing one of their songs! At the end of the song Goodwin, deeply interested, dropped his toast and came over to the piano.

"Repeat that chorus," he said to Horwitz.

Fully six or seven times Goodwin beckoned to Horwitz to sing the chorus. He became so elated over this song that he sent for his manager and his musical director. At his solicitation, they listened to the song as we repeated it six or seven times.

For the skating-rink scene in the Goodwin play, where Nat is seeking for his daughter, who, it seems, has caught the roller-skating craze of those days and

How It All Happened

consequently is rarely at home, I suggested to Goodwin that he dress as an Irish hodcarrier, with sluggers, or whiskers, and the tin dinner pail; that he should come out upon the stage and look around for Maggie, his daughter; that he should advance toward the footlights and then start the song. Goodwin looked at me in surprise and then at his manager. Here was a new idea, I explained—a song to fit the situation.

Curiously enough, this simple idea was unheard of in those days. Songs were thrown into performances promiscuously; any kind of a song in any place or situation, so long as it afforded performers the opportunity of displaying their vocal powers. The result was that the song often had no significance. My idea, even in those early days, was never to write a song that did not fit some situation, an idea which I have adhered to ever since. Perhaps this accounts for the enormous latter-day popularity of my songs.

However, Goodwin was not long in singing this song at a *matinée* performance. It proved an enormous success. Horwitz and I were both present at this *matinée*. Goodwin promised us that he would have it published by one of the large music publishing concerns in the East. We walked home fully confident of fame and fortune, for was not the reigning comedian of the day singing our song every

After the Ball

night to a large audience? Patiently we waited and waited, but never received any royalty from that song.

After a lapse of many years, I met Goodwin at the Lambs' Club, in New York, where we were seated at the same table. I greeted him.

He looked at me and said: "I do not recollect your name."

I reminded him that I, in conjunction with Charles Horwitz, had written the music for *Since Maggie Learned to Skate*, some score of years before.

He said: "That certainly was some song. You must have received quite a tidy sum for it."

Laughing good-naturedly, I replied: "My dear Mr. Goodwin, neither my collaborator nor myself have received any money from that song, notwithstanding the fact that you used it for a few seasons."

However, time, aided by fortune, glosses over many disappointments, and our conversation drifted to other topics.

This same Charles Horwitz went into vaudeville years later with one Fred C. Bowers, under the team name of Horwitz & Bowers. They collaborated on two famous ballads of twenty-five years ago, published by M. Witmark & Sons, of New York, entitled *Because* and *Always*. They later concentrated on one-word titles, but none of their other songs enjoyed the vogue of *Because* and *Always*. Fred Bowers is still playing in vaudeville, while Charles

How It All Happened

Horwitz, who dreamed of following in the footsteps of Booth and McCullough, is now writing short sketches for vaudeville acts.

But to return to those early days. Undaunted by the lack of financial returns from the skating-rink song, I continued to write songs, both words and music. The reader will naturally wonder how it was possible for me to write music to a song when even to this day I cannot distinguish one note from another. The answer is simple. As soon as a melody occurred to me, I hummed it. Then I would procure the services of a trained musician for the purpose, hum or whistle the melody for him and have him take it down on paper with notes. He would then arrange it for the piano.

This method is known as arranging. Later on I shall go into further detail regarding this procedure and point out to the reader that the vast majority of those responsible for many of our most famous songs also lack the trained musician's knowledge of musical notes, but make up for this shortcoming by the possession of a natural gift for melody.

Having written the songs, my next step was to dispose of them. Picture in your mind's eye the trials and tribulations of a young man barely eking out a pittance as a teacher of the banjo and grinding out both words and music during his spare time. Gradually I accumulated quite a collection of manuscripts. I knew that music publishers would create

After the Ball

a demand for their numbers by having prominent performers of the stage sing them; and once a song registered with the public, it would invariably seek out the first music store and purchase copies. Therein lay the secret. I reasoned that although, for financial reasons, it was well-nigh impossible for me to enter the music-publishing field, still I could try to have the prominent stage folk visiting Milwaukee sing my humble offerings. But no sooner had I overcome one obstacle than another presented itself; namely, how to procure the necessary wherewithal to attend the various theaters nightly. It was imperative for me to witness performances in order to discuss intelligently their shortcomings with the performers and to induce them to use my songs for any situations in their acts. If my songs registered with the performers and the audience, my next step would be to have them published.

By a queer coincidence, I became acquainted with the correspondent of the New York *Clipper*, the foremost theatrical weekly of that time. He informed me that a new dramatic paper was being started in New York, called the *New York Dramatic News* and edited by Leander Richardson. He suggested that I write Richardson and ascertain from him the possibilities of becoming local correspondent for the new periodical. Incidentally, I was permitted to use him—the *Clipper's* correspondent—as a reference. I knew that once the assignment of local

How It All Happened

correspondent for a dramatic paper was granted me, I would be permitted to enter any theater as a matter of courtesy. Much to my surprise, Richardson appointed me local correspondent.

At this time a skating rink had been converted into a theater and called the Standard. It was under the management of George H. Nicolai and Oscar Miller, both newcomers in the amusement field. It was to be a 10, 20 and 30 cent theater, with a weekly change of program. For instance, Baker and Farron, popular favorites, would play "Chris and Lena" one week and "The Emigrant" the next. Baker possessed a charming voice. One of the songs he used was the old lullaby, *Rock-a-by, Baby, on the Tree Top, When the Wind Blows the Cradle Will Rock*, and he would point up to an imaginary tree. It was beyond me why he should sing that song in that spot. After the performance I sought Baker out in his dressing room and suggested to him that he sing a song to fit the situation, and was dryly told to write one if I was so cocksure. I accepted his challenge, went home that night and wrote:

CREEP BABY CREEP

See our little baby creeping,
How she tries to cross the floor,
When she hears her papa's footsteps,
Knowing he is at the door.

After the Ball

How the little eyes now brighten,
As she sees him standing there.
Papa surely now will catch you,
And will kiss your golden hair.
Little hands to him outstretching,
"Papa, come and take your baby girl."
And her rosy lips so catching,
Making papa's fond heart thrill.
With a cry he folds her to him,
Nestles in his arms so close.
Papa's caught you, baby darling,
And it seems the baby knows.

CHORUS

Creep, baby, creep;
Mamma will surely catch you;
Creep, baby, creep.
Mamma is near to watch you;
Creep, baby, creep.
Creep to the breast that will love you,
Hold you so tight, mamma's delight,
Creep to me, baby, now creep.

Now her little eyes are closing,
Baby's tired, gone to sleep;
With a smile upon her sweet face,
Pretty dimples in her cheek,
Dreaming of the coming morrow,
When her little toddling feet
Try to walk to her dear mamma;
But our pet can only creep.

How It All Happened

Dream, my pretty rosebud, dream on;
Sorrow ne'er shall touch your tender heart,
While your mamma's here to guide you
From the pathways lone and dark,
For you are my only treasure.
Life without you holds no charms.
Wake up, darling, kiss your mamma,
Let me hold you in my arms.

Right here I wish to say a word regarding the lyrics of most of the descriptive songs of those days. To the average person today they undoubtedly appear more or less crude. Certain allowances should be made in order that the words may fit the music or rhythm, so as to give it that lilt or swing which makes for its popularity. When the song is rendered these defects are not so apparent. And this is true also of most of the popular songs today—the music or harmony is the thing. Of course, if the lyrics are particularly good or out of the ordinary, as is sometimes the case with a comic or jazz song having a catch line, such as *Yes, We Have No Bananas*, which appeals to the sense of humor of the average person, so much the better for the song and its ultimate success. But in most instances, as I have just stated, the music is the thing first, last, and all the time.

The following day I returned to the theater with the song in my hand. I told Baker that as he used his grandchild, an infant, in "Chris and Lena," when he came to the chorus of *Creep, Baby, Creep*, the

After the Ball

child should creep from behind the scenes out on the stage and into his arms. He grasped my idea immediately. For three consecutive seasons Baker used this song for his play, with the result that when I branched out later as a publisher many thousands of copies of this song were sold. The idea was simple, and what really caused this song to sell was its sentimental theme.

Another young man in Baker's company, named Eddie Gaven, played an Irish character, Alderman Michael O'Rourke. Owing to the success of *Creep, Baby, Creep*, he asked me to write a song entitled *Alderman Michael O'Rourke*, for ten dollars. I agreed and he gave me five dollars on account. That night I wrote the song, which the following day I delivered to Gaven, who in turn passed it on to the orchestra leader, with instructions to make an orchestration.

Meanwhile Pete Baker informed me that Gaven would try the new song the last night of the performance. I made up my mind that the song was going to be a success and so I conceived the idea that I would have someone in the gallery start the applause. The rest of the audience would surely follow. This idea has been handed down to this very day, but I can safely state that this was the first time it was ever tried out in the history of the popular song. That was the real beginning of "song plugging," which means exploiting or advertising a song

How It All Happened

by calling the public's attention to it either by singing or applauding it. I engaged a negro expressman known as Julius Cæsar, gave him a dollar, and instructed him to sit in the gallery, particularly instructing him that immediately after *Alderman Michael O'Rourke* was sung he was to applaud very loudly. From his massive hands I was satisfied there would be enough noise that night.

Saturday night I took a seat in the middle of the theater, looked up into the gallery and there was my friend Julius Cæsar sitting in the front row, watching for the big event. Gaven sang the song and received a fair round of applause from the audience in the orchestra. I waited for the big explosion from the gallery, but not a sound came thence. I looked up and saw my friend with his head on his arms, which were resting on the railing of the gallery, fast asleep. My first plugger proved a fizzle. However, the next time I was more successful.

It was during one of my visits backstage, while Peter Baker was singing *Creep, Baby, Creep*, that there stood behind the scenes a little girl of about ten years, who also appeared in the cast. She pulled me by the sleeve and said, "Aren't you the Mr. Harris who wrote that beautiful song?"

"Yes," said I.

"I wish you would write a song for me for next week, as I have a good part in 'The Emigrant'."

"What part do you play?" said I.

After the Ball

"I'm the emigrant's daughter, and when we move to America no one wants to play with me and I am sitting by the kitchen door all alone."

"Do you suppose Mr. Baker would like you to sing a song if I wrote one?"

"He has been looking for a song for me for a long time."

"Well, my little dear," said I, "I will write a song for you entitled *Sitting by the Kitchen Door*."

The little girl sang this song with great success. She gave me her photograph and wrote her name on it. It was little Irene Franklin, who today is one of America's most versatile actresses and whose name is well known to those familiar with variety performers. Her husband, Burt Green, was one of my dearest friends in after years.

Meanwhile I continued supporting myself by teaching the banjo, as I had not yet definitely decided to abandon this means of earning my livelihood. There were two publishing houses at that time in Milwaukee. One was that of William H. Rohlfing & Sons and the other of J. S. Lake, a very small music house. In addition, the former retailed musical instruments. Both houses specialized in publishing classical songs exclusively,—popular songs, in our present sense of the term, being then entirely unknown.

I had written a song entitled *Kiss and Let's Make Up*, containing a simple plot, wherein two children,

How It All Happened

a boy and a girl, are at play upon the sand. The girl had erected a small sand pile and the boy, in a mischievous mood, kicked over the sand pile, making his playmate cry. His childish feelings are aroused and he seeks to make amends:

KISS AND LET'S MAKE UP

Two little playmates, a boy and a girl,
Were playing one day on the sands.
They had built up a house of pretty sea shells,
With no tools but their little brown hands.
At last it was finished, their work was well done,
And two little hearts were made glad;
When the boy, just for fun, gave a kick, then did run,
And down came the house on the sands.
The girl for a moment stood shocked and surprised,
Then tears to her pretty eyes came.
"I'll never forgive him," she sobbingly cried.
"Oh, how could my Jack be so mean?"
And when the lad saw his sweetheart in tears,
He manfully to her side came,
And throwing his arms around her dear form,
Said, "Kiss and let's make up again."

CHORUS

Kiss and let's make up, my darling.
Dry your tears, don't cry in vain,
For you know I love you, darling.
Yes, I know I was to blame.

After the Ball

So you wished you'd never met me?

Don't say that, my little pet.

What would this life be without you?

Kiss and let's make up.

The years rolled by, the lad sailed away,

The maiden, she waited in vain.

Could Jack have forgotten those bright happy days,

When oft to the cottage he came?

The shells by the seashore are strewn all about,

Each one brings fond memories back;

When they built little houses upon the warm sands,

She and her boy lover Jack,

He promised to write to her once every week.

Had another fair face won his heart?

Or else had he tired of his true country lass?

Was he satisfied that they should part?

But the true honest fellow was sailing back home

To the girl who was waiting in vain

To hear his dear voice whisper low in her ear,

"Come kiss and let's make up again."

As none of my songs had ever appeared in printed form, I was eager to have this song published; and so one day I strolled into Rohlfing's with my manuscript under my arm. Bearding Charles Rohlfing, son of William, in his den, I timidly offered my manuscript. He looked it over and commanded me to play it, which I did. When I finished he burst out laughing and said, "You call that a lyric? That's nonsense. Two little kids building a house

How It All Happened

of sand and the boy kicks it down! That's no story for a song. Here are the kind of songs they want today," and he showed me songs written about birds, stars, rippling streams, the perfume of the flowers, the thee-and-thou songs.

"All right," said I, giving him the benefit of the doubt, "I will write a song on that order."

Three days later I brought him *Thou Art Ever in My Thoughts*, which he accepted immediately and published. This was the first song bearing my name that ever appeared in published form. The chorus was:

Thou art ever in my thoughts, thy sweet face is ever near.
Could I ever, no, no, never, forget thy love so dear?

Thou art ever in my thoughts, never doubt; my heart it
all is thine.

In waking, in dreaming, in pleasure, in tears, thou art
ever in my thoughts.

Happy at the appearance of my song in printed form, I felt, nevertheless, that Rohlfing had made a big mistake in not publishing *Kiss and Let's Make Up*. I received \$16.75 royalty for *Thou Art Ever in My Thoughts*. Royalties were few and far between in those days.

CHAPTER II

Reaping the First Fruits

A Taste of Temperament—A Boy of Eighteen—A Typical Topical Song—William Faversham—Bessie Bonehill—My First Performances—My First Publishing Enterprise—Framing Each Other.

A FEW months after the publication of my song *Thou Art Ever in My Thoughts*, a new music dealer, A. A. Fisher, opened up in the city. He pressed Rohlfsing & Sons for supremacy. I purchased several banjos for my pupils through his house. We soon became acquainted, and Fisher took a fancy to me. Upon discovering that my studio was in my mother's parlor, he offered me a room above his store, gratis, provided I send my pupils to his store for their strings, books, and music. I seized the opportunity immediately.

Everything was going along smoothly, with the exception of Fisher's little son, then about eight years of age. It seemed to me that he was the original Peck's Bad Boy, nicknamed Bud. He was as thoroughly absorbed in the banjo as I had been at his age. He had a peculiar liking for the Spanish

Reaping the First Fruits

Fandango and would often stop me in the midst of my teaching and insist that I play this composition. I had to accede to his request as the only way of getting rid of him. This same little chap, Bud Fisher, eventually drifted into the newspaper field and became a cartoonist. He created the Mutt and Jeff comic strip, which is syndicated through hundreds of newspapers daily.

Fisher, Senior, sold out a year later and I moved to a little office at 207 Grand Avenue, the rent being \$7.50 a month, where again I hung out my shingle—Banjoist and Song Writer. Songs, Written to Order.

Gus Williams, the eminent German comedian, was to appear at the Bijou Theater in "One of the Finest." Gus was singing several of his own compositions. I decided to land him with one of my songs. I understood that he was partial to baby songs at the time. I knew his manager, Eddie Cook, intimately, who, by the way, was a Milwaukeean and who is now located in New York.

I told Eddie my troubles. He suggested that I appear in Williams' dressing rooms at seven that evening, when he would introduce me to him. I was there at the appointed hour. Eddie came to me and told me to wait a moment, saying that he wished to prepare Williams first, for the comedian was very temperamental. I waited at the head of the stairs and overheard the conversation between them.

After the Ball

Eddie started it by saying, "Good evening, Mr. Williams."

A gruff voice grunted, "'Evening."

That did not sound so good to me.

"Mr. Williams," again started Eddie, "a young friend of mine has written a beautiful child song called *Only a Tangle of Golden Curls*. I think it would fit a certain situation in your play."

"Songs!" roared Williams. "See here, young fellow, please remember that Gus Williams writes all his own songs and does not need any outside stuff whatever, especially those written by amateurs," Eddie vamosed.

Not wishing Eddie to think I had overheard the conversation, I sneaked out in front of the theater. He came along and told me that Williams was grouchy, but that he would try to manage it some other evening.

A few years later, when I had written *After the Ball*, Williams again played at the Bijou Theater, in a new play. I did not see the show, as that actor did not interest me after he had expressed his opinion of amateur song writers. That same night as I was sitting in a restaurant patronized by the profession, Mr. Williams entered with Mr. Will Dunlop, the dramatic critic of the *Evening Wisconsin*. Will was a friend of mine, and both took seats near my table. He said something to Mr. Williams about my being there, and the latter expressed a desire to meet me.

Reaping the First Fruits

Still smarting under his treatment of both Cook and myself, I told Dunlop I did not care to meet Williams, and he conveyed this information to that gentleman.

The following morning Mr. Williams walked into my office and demanded an explanation for my refusal to meet him the evening before. I reminded him of the Cook incident and explained what it would have meant for me at that time if he had sung one of my songs. But he interrupted with: "Ah, my boy, you never know what goes on back of the stage before a performance begins. I had a little tiff with my Frau that night, which was soon forgotten, but which left me in a very bad humor. I now recall the incident and humbly apologize for my rudeness."

I asked Williams to sit down and offered him a cigar. I soon found him a charming fellow with a fund of humor and a heart of gold. I learned to admire him, and we remained fast friends for twenty-five years. How well I recall a beautiful poem he wrote, which is still ringing in my ears. He recited it in his quaint German dialect and it always registered with his audiences. It ran something like this:

THE WATER MILL

Listen to that water mill all the livelong day,
And the creaking of the wheel as it wears the hours away.

After the Ball

Languidly the water glides tireless on and still,
Never coming back again to the water mill.
And the proverb haunts my mind, as the spell is o'er me
cast,
That the mill will never grind with the water that is past.
Take this lesson to yourselves, honest hearts and true,
Golden years are passing by and youth is passing, too.
Always make the best of life, lose no honest way.
All that you can call your own, lies in this today.
Power, intellect, and strength, cannot always last,
For the mill will never grind with the water that is past.

Williams has passed on to the Great Beyond, but he will always be remembered as one of the finest German comedians that ever appeared upon the stage.

About that time something happened that made me feel as if my star was ascending. I received a letter from the famous David Henderson, manager of the Chicago Opera House and producer of the popular extravaganzas, "Sinbad the Sailor" and "Ali Baba and the Forty Thieves." Imagine my excitement and delight when I read that Henderson wanted the then obscure banjo teacher to write some new songs for a new edition of "Ali Baba." I had never dreamed that such a stroke of luck would come to me. I could only account for it by supposing that some singer for whom I had written a song had mentioned my name to this celebrated manager.

I pawned my silver watch for six dollars. The

Reaping the First Fruits

fare on the Whaleback, a large steamer then plying between Milwaukee and Chicago, was two dollars a round trip; together with board and lodging, I figured it would amount in all to \$5.70, which would leave me about thirty cents with which to return home.

On arriving at Chicago I found my way to the Chicago Opera House, where Henderson was located, and with much trepidation entered his office.

Henderson looked up at me with the query, "Well?"

Somewhat taken aback, I pulled out Henderson's own letter, which I handed to him as the best means of introducing myself. After glancing at my precious missive he casually inquired, much to my surprise, about my father. I told him that my father was home in Milwaukee at his work. When he thereupon asked for the song writer to whom his letter was addressed, it dawned upon me that my extreme youth (I was only eighteen then) was misleading and that it would be necessary for me to convince Henderson that the youngster before him was really the Charles K. Harris he had requested to come to Chicago. I can still recall very clearly his look of amazement and his ejaculation, "Ye gods!" Fortunately, I convinced Henderson of my identity, and we proceeded to discuss the matter of new songs for his coming production.

At that time Eddie Foy was the featured comedian

After the Ball

in "Ali Baba," and it occurred to me while traveling from Milwaukee to Chicago to prepare a song for him, which I did, and brought it with me. Seeing a piano in his office and sitting down without an invitation, I ran over a new topical song entitled *Am I Right?* Then I turned to him and asked what the leading topics in Chicago were.

He said: "Well, our river is in bad shape; it smells to heaven. Our street cars are all run down. Our police department is in bad shape."

I immediately wrote lyrics around each topic Henderson had mentioned, while he eyed me in amazement.

"Mr. Henderson," said I, "the trick of the song business is this: Fit your songs to the situation; also, write songs that appeal to the imagination as well as point a moral. To keep your audience interested, give it a good popular tune, one that it can whistle, and you not only make a hit with the song, but also assure success for your show."

I guess no one had ever spoken to him like that before, and I am proud to say that he followed the advice of a boy of eighteen. He sent for Eddie Foy and the orchestra leader, and gave them that song to be used for "Ali Baba."

Flushed with my success, I asked Henderson what other songs he wanted.

"I want one for Ida Mulle, our leading soubrette."

"What situation?" said I.



EDDIE FOY, N.Y.C.

Eddie Foy

Reaping the First Fruits

"Well, it is a sort of Romeo and Juliet scene, with a moonlight night; she is singing from the balcony to her lover, who has left her after a lovers' quarrel."

"That's enough," said I. "This song will take me a little longer, Mr. Henderson, as it is a ballad and must be treated accordingly—a beautiful melody and a lyric to fit the situation."

"Where are you stopping?" asked Mr. Henderson.

"My satchel," said I, "is at the Union Depot, where I have checked it."

Picking up the 'phone and calling the Palmer House, Henderson ordered them to reserve a suite of rooms for me at his expense. I repaired to the Palmer House, where I found my satchel with my scant belongings. A boy showed me to the room. Instead of one room, it was five rooms, consisting of a parlor, library, dining room, bedroom, and kitchen. It must have been the bridal suite. The hotel at that time was run on the American plan—four meals a day. I assure you I never missed one of them.

Nevertheless, I worked faithfully on the song that night. The piano that was in my room came in very handy. The song was entitled *Last Night as the Moon Was Shining*.

After I submitted the ballad Henderson called me to his office and said: "Harris, your work is splendid and is very satisfactory to all of us. When the production opens in two weeks we will have you

After the Ball

come down to the opening performance. Meanwhile you say you have a return ticket. Your expenses are all paid at the hotel. Your boat leaves at five o'clock. Here is an envelope which you are not to open until you get on the boat."

He shook my hand heartily and wished me good luck.

I made up my mind not to open that envelope, but to have my mother, who was my guiding star, do it.

On the boat that night there was a young chap with a fine voice singing at the piano, surrounded and admired by a dozen girls. The song, which seemed most popular and which I enjoyed very much, was *There is No One to Welcome You Home*. It always lingered in my memory, for when the boat arrived the next morning, the young man was greeted warmly by two Milwaukee detectives, who gave him a real welcome. I learned he was a thief from Chicago. No one to welcome him, indeed!

When I reached home my mother was very much excited, wanting to hear all the news. So I told her the entire story.

"Your board and expenses were all you got for writing those songs?" she asked.

The fact was that I had entirely forgotten the envelope. Now happening to think of it, I drew it from my pocket and said: "Here, mother, is something Mr. Henderson said I should not open until I got on the boat. I decided not to open it myself,

Reaping the First Fruits

but to give it to you to open, as you have always been lucky for me."

She opened it with trembling fingers. It contained four new fifty-dollar bills! Mother almost fainted and I nearly collapsed, never having seen so much money before, that being the biggest price I had ever received for my songs,—ten dollars was the regular price for words and music. Mother kept that fortune, giving me five dollars for spending money, which pleased me very much indeed.

A dear friend in those days was Hal Coleman, dramatic critic on a local newspaper. Coleman was musically inclined, and his bachelor quarters contained a piano, a banjo, and a guitar. He frequently entertained touring companies passing through Milwaukee. One night he informed me that he was arranging to entertain a certain theatrical company playing Milwaukee and asked me if I would not assist him by playing the banjo and singing a few of my new songs. Flushed with my first success due to Henderson, I had begun to study the piano at home, picking out the notes with one finger, and soon found the notes responsive to my touch. Besides, no one hearing me play could tell whether I played by ear or note.

On the night that Coleman's guests were being entertained I sat down at the piano and brought out the lyrics of my song, *Kiss and Let's Make Up*, which had previously been shunted aside by the

After the Ball

Rohlfing people. One of the actors in the group listened attentively and, when I was through, inquired who had written and composed it. On being told, he said:

"That's splendid. I know someone in England to whom this song will appeal. Her name is Bessie Bonehill. I received a letter from her not so long ago saying she is going to tour America. She is one of the biggest variety stars in England. If she ever visits Milwaukee or Chicago, I would advise you to call on her."

Here I must interrupt my narrative to say that the real start at popularizing a song is to sell it to the performers. If it strikes their fancy, they will surely sing it for the public. Common sense tells one that the bigger the reputation and ability of the performer whose assistance the author and composer enlist, the more chances of its success in catching the public's favor.

When repeating the chorus, this actor joined in with his beautiful high tenor voice. After this soiree we walked over to his hotel and he invited me to his room, where we chatted for another hour. He told me that he had just come over on his first trip from England and that his name was William Faversham. He said that he was determined to make good here and that eventually his name would be displayed in bright lights on Broadway. He wished me success and predicted that if I kept on writing

Reaping the First Fruits

songs I would surely attain it. His prediction concerning himself came true, for when I saw him fifteen years later he was starring on Broadway in "The Conquerors." I was visiting New York at the time and stopped at the Hotel Imperial. I had entered the hotel elevator one evening and hardly noticed my fellow passenger beside me. We both called out the same floor to the elevator boy. I glanced up at this passenger and recognized him.

"Good evening, Mr. Faversham," I said, and he looked sharply at me. Continuing, I said: "You don't remember me, I suppose. I met you at Hal Coleman's rooms in Milwaukee when I sang *Kiss and Let's Make Up*."

"By Jove!" exclaimed Faversham in his typical English manner, "After-the-Ball Harris!"

We left the elevator together, and that night Faversham insisted upon my being his guest at a performance of "The Conquerors."

Of course, it is very easy for one to skim over the hardships encountered by all mortals in their struggle for success and recognition, and no doubt Faversham could write page upon page about how a poor, obscure Englishman attained success in America.

Returning to the period of my first meeting with Faversham, I had read that Tony Pastor had induced Bessie Bonehill to tour America. We must bear in mind that in those days every manager connected with the amusement world tried to emulate

After the Ball

the greatest showman of them all—P. T. Barnum. He must be constantly on the lookout for new acts, talent, and performers for the public. Even today all the large theatrical interests have representatives in foreign countries acting as scouts for them in procuring something new to entertain theatergoers. The biggest theatrical manager in those days was Tony Pastor, who frequently offered staggering figures for his time to procure new faces for the American variety stage.

By carefully scanning the theatrical gleanings in newspapers I kept pace with Miss Bonehill's movements. And what a sensation she created in her first appearance in New York at Tony Pastor's Fourteenth Street Theater! The same sensational successes were scored wherever she appeared. Finally I learned that her itinerary called for her appearance at the old Olympic Theater in Chicago, managed for more than thirty years by Abe Jacobs. I determined to risk a trip to Chicago, make the manager's acquaintance, and endeavor to meet the famous Bessie Bonehill. And so it came to pass that I again boarded the Whaleback for Chicago, but this time at no one's request. Alighting from the steamer, I made my way to the Olympic Theater and then to Jacob's office, where I told him my object. This meeting was before the performance commenced. He told me to return immediately after

Reaping the First Fruits

Miss Bonehill's turn, when he would take me backstage and introduce us.

Miss Bonehill repeated her triumph in Chicago. She possessed an uncanny method in registering songs to her audience. After the performance Mr. Jacobs introduced me to her as a song writer. He then left me to her tender mercy. Her maid was taking down her hair as she beckoned me to sit down on her trunk. Dressing rooms in those days were small cubbyholes. She asked me the style of songs I wrote. I told her songs that unfolded a story.

"Sing one for me," she said.

So I unrolled the lyric of *Kiss and Let's Make Up*, and, without any accompaniment, sang it. I saw her motion to her maid to stop dressing her hair. This song affected her so much that she bade me sing it three times. Still absorbed in the song, she invited me to her hotel, where there was a piano. Again I repeated it for her, with the result that she accepted the song and kept it in her repertoire for three years. I dare say there are many persons still living today who heard *Kiss and Let's Make Up* thirty-five years ago.

Here again I must repeat that I found that one of the main requisites for starting a new song on its popularity is to have it sung by some leading artist; otherwise the public would never hear of it. Hence I found it useless to go to a publisher with simply a

After the Ball

manuscript and ask him to publish it. They all gave the same excuse: I was an unknown writer who had never written a hit. No one had ever heard any of my numbers. If a copy was printed with my name on it, it carried no weight.

The publishers said: "Have your songs properly introduced. If there is a call for them, we will gladly publish them."

In after years, when I had gone into the publishing business on my own hook, I found that their advice was correct. A new song must be sung, played, hummed, and drummed into the ears of the public, not in one city alone, but in every city, town, and village, before it ever becomes popular.

On my return from Chicago there was a letter awaiting me from my eldest brother, who was engaged in business in Oshkosh, Wisconsin, seventy-five miles from Milwaukee. He invited me to spend a week-end with him and bring along my banjo so that he could entertain his friends. He even forwarded me a return ticket and offered to pay all my expenses. In real troubadour fashion, I gladly accepted his invitation.

On my arrival at Oshkosh on Saturday night I was immediately taken to my brother's home. After dinner he informed me that I was slated to play at a concert that night. As these were the days before the automobile, a closed carriage called for us and we were driven about five miles beyond the city.

Reaping the First Fruits

At eight P. M. we reached our destination. The building loomed up dark, and as we entered the hall my brother was greeted by a gentleman and his wife, who were delighted to see us. I was introduced to the couple—the doctor and his wife. They were very cordial to me and said that I had arrived just in time to go on with my act. They had feared that I might disappoint them.

I was ushered upon a platform and had just time enough to pull off the cover of my banjo and tune it up before being announced to the audience. I heard a great round of applause at the mention of my name and felt very proud, as I did not know that my fame had reached as far as Oshkosh, seventy-five miles away from my home town.

I walked out on the platform and received a big ovation. I immediately began to sing a medley of old-time darky songs, which was received with tremendous applause, and followed it by an imitation of the Trinity Church Chimes, swinging the banjo with one hand. The audience kept up its incessant applause. I finished the hit with *Home, Sweet Home*. To my last day, I shall never forget the reception that greeted me then. They were still yelling and applauding when I left the platform.

The doctor and his wife shook my hand cordially and thanked me. I asked the doctor what the name of the college was for which I had played.

“College?” said he. “This is no college.”

After the Ball

"Well, what is it?"

"This is the Northern Hospital for the Insane."
Tableau!

My next experience as an actor was due to my friend Hal Coleman, who wished to desert dramatic criticism for the more profitable field of theatrical managership. He desired to form a small, select company of entertainers to play in six towns in the vicinity of Milwaukee. Coleman proposed to advance all expenses and share the profits equally with the performers. He engaged one Wallie Heiber, a well-known church soprano; Gus Weinberg, a Milwaukeean, who is now a famous character actor; Charles Horwitz, my old partner, who, with my collaboration, had written *Since Maggie Learned to Skate*; one Hambitzer, a well-known pianist and music publisher, as leader; and myself.

Our first performance was to be given at Waukesha, Wisconsin. On arriving at Waukesha we were escorted to the hotel, where we dined. We then walked to the Opera House a few blocks away.

The floor above the theater was the Odd Fellows Hall. As soon as we entered the theater it commenced to rain. The manager of the theater told us that we had struck a bad night, as the people in Waukesha would never attend a theater on a rainy night; and that, to make matters worse, the Odd Fellows were having an installation and their wives and

Reaping the First Fruits

families accompanied them for the big banquet that usually followed. It looked dark for the Coleman entertainers that night.

Meanwhile we performers went to our dressing rooms and made up. Hambitzer played his opening on a tin-pan piano. I peeked through a hole in the curtain to see how the audience was piling in, but all I could discern was that the first four seats held the proprietor of the hotel at which we were stopping, his wife, and two small children as our entire audience in the hall—except the janitor. I was too scared to impart the news to my fellow actors. As Miss Heiber was the first one to sing, I knew she would find it out quickly enough.

The shabby curtain arose and out walked Miss Heiber upon the stage and sang as I had never heard her sing before. Her beautiful voice filled the hall and the audience of four enthusiastically applauded. She repeated by singing an aria from Faust. She was followed by Gus Weinberg in comic songs and monologues. Then came Charles Horwitz with Shakspearean readings, while I closed the olio with my banjo and songs. That concluded the first part.

We actors sat around on the stage and consoled ourselves. Meanwhile Hal Coleman, unaware of the Odd Fellows' installation, had gone upstairs to see what all the noise was about. He was told about the meeting of the Odd Fellows. Requesting permission to speak to the president of that organiza-

After the Ball

tion, Coleman informed him that a wonderful entertainment was going on downstairs. The president desiring information as to the identity of the performers, Coleman proceeded to mention all the names. When he came to mine, the president asked if I was the son of Jacob Harris, of Milwaukee. When Coleman nodded in the affirmative, the president exclaimed, "He is the president of the Odd Fellows in Milwaukee."

"Certainly," said Hal, as his face lit up. "That's why I am here to see you."

"In that case," came back the answer, "we will all be down immediately and you can start your performance all over again."

When the curtain rose on the second part and Miss Heiber walked out upon the stage, she was startled to find every seat occupied. Judging from the applause accorded us, we must have given a great performance that night.

That was my second appearance on any stage. The story of the rest of the engagement had better be left untold. By the time we were through, Coleman had run into debt.

A few days after we returned home Charles Horwitz came to my office to tell me that he had resigned his position as bookkeeper and had joined the Ray L. Royce Comedy Company. They had asked him if he knew of a good banjoist, and he mentioned my name. He suggested that here was an opportunity

Reaping the First Fruits

to become a regular actor. With my recent experiences in Waukesha and the surrounding towns fresh in my mind, I decided to keep off the stage entirely and devote my time to writing songs. In the course of our conversation I gathered that Horwitz was to sing with this company. I had just finished a song that I wanted Horwitz to introduce in his new surroundings. It was something novel—a story about the telephone, which I called *Hello, Central, Hello!* I showed Horwitz the manuscript, and after singing it over once he decided to use it. Horwitz suggested that it would be an excellent idea to have a number of copies printed, which he could sell in the lobbies of the theaters for twenty-five cents a copy, provided he could buy them from me for ten cents, which would net him quite a profit. He said he would purchase them at ten dollars a hundred to which terms I agreed.

Horwitz left town a week later with the Royce Comedy Company. Soon he wrote me that the song was registering with the public and inclosed his route of one-night stands from Milwaukee to Denver, requesting that I forward one hundred copies of the song to Kansas City immediately.

In my zeal to put this new song before the public the way Horwitz suggested, I overlooked the fact that it would take money to have the song printed, engrave the plates, make up the title page, and to do a dozen other things pertaining to song publishing of

After the Ball

which I knew nothing. Besides, my banjo students had dropped out at this time until I had none left. At this juncture a young man walked into my studio and inquired as to my fee for teaching him to play the banjo. When I told him thirty-five dollars, he said he could not pay that amount. In the course of our conversation I learned that he was an engraver, and he finally agreed to make me a set of plates, including a title plate, in exchange for banjo lessons.

Two weeks later he informed me that the plates and the title page were ready, and that he had sent them to a printer named Stern, who was holding them until I specified the number of copies I wished printed. I immediately saw Stern and ordered him to print one thousand copies at a cost of fifteen dollars.

When the songs were ready he sent for me. I came over with the fifteen dollars to pay for them. He informed me that the engraver had not paid for either the plates or the title page. I was astounded and told him of the arrangements I had made with the engraver. He told me that had nothing to do with him. The engraver, instead of engraving the plates, had ordered Stern to set them up in music type,¹ he being the only printer who possessed a set of such type in the city. The printer insisted therefore that I pay him forty-five dollars.

¹ This method of setting music type is now obsolete. Nowadays it is done by stone and lithographing.

Reaping the First Fruits

However, my capital at that time was much below forty-five dollars, and the more I pleaded with the printer to let me have the music for fifteen dollars, as agreed with the engraver, the firmer he held his ground. I hurried over to the engraver's shop and accused him of deception. His excuse was that the printer had promised to send the plates to his office so that he could look them over before paying for them. Buffeted between the printer's and the engraver's arguments, I finally managed, with loans made from various members of my family, to raise the necessary additional thirty dollars, and turned the whole amount over to the printer, who thereupon delivered to me one thousand copies of the first song published by myself, *Hello, Central, Hello!*

I carried the bundle of songs to my small studio, where I unpacked and fingered them. What a thrill came over me, now that I look back to more than thirty-five years ago, when I saw both words and music with my imprint—and published by myself. I suppose it is akin to the feeling experienced by every author upon gazing for the first time upon his name in print.

I immediately dispatched one hundred copies to Horwitz in Kansas City. A wire had come in meanwhile for more to be sent to another town, and money invariably followed these wires.

Julius P. Witmark, billed as the Boy Tenor, was

After the Ball

playing Milwaukee in a musical *mélange* called "The City Directory." His brothers, father, and himself had entered in the music-publishing business, their first publication being *The Picture Turned to the Wall*. This song was written by Charles Grahame, who had got the idea on witnessing a performance of Hazel Kirke at the old Lyceum Theater in New York City. In one of the scenes of this drama an irate father turns the picture of an erring daughter to the wall. Endowed with a remarkably resonant voice, Witmark toured the country and always finished his bit with *The Picture Turned to the Wall*. As his family was financially interested in this song, his next move was to visit all the music stores in the city and distribute title pages of this selection.

It was on his first appearance in my home town that we became acquainted. Whenever he returned to Milwaukee he would come to my banjo studio, and we became close friends. It was during one of his visits to Milwaukee that he suggested that I furnish his concern, M. Witmark & Sons, with a song for publication. He added that a song originating in New York City would be sure to succeed. He also suggested that I send it in care of his oldest brother, Isidor, the active head of the company, who at that time was only nineteen years of age. A few weeks later I sent him a song I had written, entitled *When the Sun Has Set*. The song was accordingly

Reaping the First Fruits

published, and six months later I received a postal note for eighty-four cents royalty. Feeling indignant, I wrote to Isidor that it was the smallest return I had ever received for any song; that I intended framing the postal note for a souvenir and writing beneath it, "The smallest royalty statement on record." As I recall it, Isidor Witmark replied thus:

"Yours to hand. Would say I am also framing your song and hanging it in a conspicuous place in my office where all in the profession can see it. Underneath I am writing this: 'The only song we ever published that did not sell.'"

Nevertheless, the Witmarks and I have remained sincere friends, although we became competitors in the same field later.

I can also recall receiving a letter from S. Brainard & Sons, music publishers in Chicago, asking me to send some of my manuscripts to them. My name was beginning to spread slowly. Eddie Foy, Ida Mülle, and Bessie Bonehill were using my compositions. I sent the Brainards two manuscripts, entitled *I Wonder, I Wonder*, a little love ballad, and a baby song, *Humming Baby to Sleep*, which were immediately accepted for publication. They sent me a royalty contract and published the songs within a very short time. My royalties for these two songs in six months amounted to exactly \$6.44!

CHAPTER III

After the Ball

Forming a Publishing Company—How “After the Ball” Came to be Written—Courting Singers—Annie Whitney and May Irwin the First to Sing It—James Aldrich Libby—

MY few experiences with publishers had been far from pleasant, and I decided to publish my own songs. Surely I could not fare any worse if I published them myself. If my songs sold, no one would share in the profits. Although I had published *Hello, Central, Hello!* I still was in the dark regarding the business secrets of publishing, which involves printing, selling, administrative and organizing angles—to say nothing of the financial angle.

I had a friend, John W. Nau, employed by Joseph Flanner, a Milwaukee music dealer. Nau was known as the best-posted music man in the West. As I had bought a great many banjo books and strings from John, we became quite chummy. One day I arranged to take lunch with him. I thought he would be the ideal partner for a music-publishing enterprise, and when I broached the subject to him,

After the Ball

John reasoned that he knew at the present time his salary awaited him; that it took a lot of money to go into the publishing business; and that besides, he was not flushed with money. Nevertheless, he said I had given him a great idea. We all like to make a little money on the side. Now, he knew that I could write songs and that there should be a market for popular ballads of my style. He based his view on twenty years' experience in the musical business. He told me of a friend in Chicago, employed by John Church & Co., one of the large publishers in the United States, whose name was Henry MacCoy and who was even more thoroughly acquainted with the business than himself. Perhaps, he thought, we could interest him in our proposition.

The following Sunday, after writing MacCoy that we were going to visit him, we arrived at his home, where we were cordially welcomed by MacCoy and his charming wife. John laid the plan before him. MacCoy was not so enthusiastic about it as he might have been. Perhaps he was too conservative. But his wife, who had listened to the conversation, jumped at the idea immediately, and it was through her influence that MacCoy accepted the proposition.

The proposal was that they together were to put in the sum of \$500 and I to put in all the manuscripts I should write during one year. If at the expiration of that period they wished to continue with me, they

After the Ball

could extend the contract for another year. We were to share all profits equally, if there were any. We all signed on the dotted line, and a new publishing concern was born—Charles K. Harris & Co., 207 Grand Avenue, Milwaukee, Wisconsin. I turned over to them *Hello, Central, Hello!* which had already been published. We placed in press *Kiss and Let's Make Up; School Bells; You'll Never Know; Creep, Baby, Creep; Can Hearts So Soon Forget?* and *Only a Tangle of Golden Curls*.

My studio at the above-mentioned address was the headquarters. John Nau, on finishing his work at Flanner's music house, would hasten to my studio and we would work together until late at night, forwarding songs from our meager catalogue to the different music dealers throughout the United States. In three months I had gained a comprehensive knowledge of the music business and soon thereafter took entire charge of it. That year we cleared more than \$3000 net profit. However, I found myself doing all the work and my partners drawing their weekly stipends.

New Year's Day, 1892, a meeting was called in my studio at which I offered to enter into a long-time agreement with them on one condition—that they were to leave their present positions and all work together. Again the conservative MacCoy could not see it that way, being reluctant to give up a well-paying position. John Nau, to his credit, agreed;

After the Ball

but, of course, would not do so unless MacCoy did also. Not making any headway, I made them another proposition—that they could either buy my interest in the business or I purchase theirs. Nau, being a rather practical fellow, said that, inasmuch as neither MacCoy nor he wrote songs, it was futile for them to purchase my end, and they decided to accept my offer to purchase their interests. Thus I arranged to pay them \$100 on account and give them my notes, payable in monthly installments, for one year.

We went downstairs to the café and Nau proposed a toast: “Here’s to the success of Charles K. Harris, music publisher, the only individual publisher and song writer in the world today; and long may he live and prosper.”

“Hear, hear!” said MacCoy, and the deal was closed.

John W. Nau died ten years ago. Henry MacCoy left John Church & Co. and has been for many years connected with Theo. Presser in Philadelphia.

The first one to whom I imparted my new arrangement was my mother. I told her that I had bought out my partners and that I was going into it to sink or swim, and resolved I would never have another partner in the music business. And so for thirty-two years I remained an individual publisher. During all these years I saw many concerns spring up and fall by the wayside—the only publishers of popular

After the Ball

music who have lasted, exclusive of myself, being M. Witmark & Sons, who preceded me by one year. I can never forget my mother's encouragement when I embarked upon publishing on my own hook.

I felt very proud next morning when arriving at my little studio. There were a few shelves lined against the walls containing copies of my songs. They were printed on a small press by Pollworth & Brother, two young men who had just opened a small establishment having only one press. These enterprising young men had purchased the music type from my former printer, who gladly disposed of it when he discovered that people in Milwaukee had rare occasion to have music printed.

My youngest sister, Ada, then about seventeen, had cultivated the friendship of a young girl living in Chicago, who often visited us in Milwaukee. It was on one of those occasions that my sister received an invitation to attend a ball to be given by a club presided over by her Chicago chum. The task of escorting my sister to Chicago was mine by assignment. Arriving two hours later in Chicago, we were put up in the home of Ada's friend. The ball was to take place that same evening. It was in the days when lamps dimly illuminated the paved streets, when surreys and carriages dotted the streets. It was the days of dancing before the great god Jazz had cracked his whip. The fox trot, two-step, tango

After the Ball

and similar dances came some thirty years later. Couples then glided about the floor gracefully, executing the waltz, minuet, quadrille, and schottische. As a young man I had often attended balls, social soirées and the like; but that particular affair that night in Chicago will linger in my memory until I am laid away in the dreamless dust of silence. It was there that I got the inspiration for *After the Ball*, as the reader will see presently.

Let me return to it and live it over again. The ballroom was crowded, the majority of the dancers being members of the same club, all seeming to know one another. I was introduced by my hostess to a little dark-eyed Southern girl, who eventually became my wife—Miss Cora Lerhberg, of Owensboro, Kentucky—who, with her folks, had just moved to Chicago and was also a member of the club. Perhaps it was a case of love at first sight. We danced together all evening, much to my delight. Gathered in our group that night was a charming young couple, engaged to be married. Suddenly we learned that the engagement was broken. Just a lover's quarrel, I presumed at the time; but they were both too proud to acknowledge that they were in the wrong.

The ball lasted until early in the morning, and we were all leaving for our respective homes, when I noticed, just ahead of our party, waiting for his carriage, this young man escorting, not his fiancée, but

After the Ball

another charming miss. Lover-like, he probably felt that, by causing his sweetheart a pang of jealousy, she would be more willing to forgive and forget. Of course, she did not know this. She simply knew that her Harry was easily consoled and that her place was usurped by another. Tears came to her eyes, though she tried to hide them behind a smile and a careless toss of the head. On witnessing this little drama the thought came to me like a flash, "Many a heart is aching after the ball," and this was the inception of that well-known song.

When I returned to my small office the next day I was completely exhausted from the trip and the ball the previous evening, and lay down upon a sofa in my studio for relaxation before entering upon the day's work. I had rested only a few moments when an amateur singer, my tailor, Sam Doctor, rushed into my studio in great excitement and roused me from my peaceful slumber. He said he knew of a real honest-to-goodness job for me. The Wheelmen's Club, of which he was secretary, was getting up a minstrel show to be given within the next two weeks at the Academy of Music. This was due, I suppose, to Milwaukee being chosen that year as the scene of the club's annual convention, which was expected to bring to Milwaukee representatives of all other Wheelmen's Clubs throughout the United States.

Doctor told me that he would like to use in the min-

After the Ball

strel show an entirely new song. I replied that I had just returned from Chicago, tired and sleepy, but that if he left me to myself for a few moments I would endeavor to think of an idea for him. After his departure I returned to the sofa, lay down upon it with my arms clasped behind my head, and gazed at the ceiling. There it was! It appeared as a mirage—the estranged couple of the previous night whose pride, for some reason or other, kept them apart. I immediately sprang from the sofa and in one hour's time wrote the complete lyric and music of *After the Ball*.

In doing this it was necessary for me to weave a complete story full of sentiment. I wrote of a little girl climbing upon her uncle's knee and, with child-like naïveté, asking for a story—"Why are you single, why live alone?" And then I created the situation where the uncle flashes back to the time when he saw his sweetheart in the arms of another. She tried to explain, but he would have nothing of her explanation, believing her faithless until years later, when he discovered that it was her brother who had held her. Of course, I capitalized the sentiment in the last four lines of the chorus, and out of its fabric were spun the three verses contained in that ballad.

I find that sentiment plays a large part in our lives. The most hardened character or the most cynical individual will succumb to sentiment sometime or other. In all my ballads I have purposely injected

After the Ball

AFTER THE BALL.

Arr. by JOS. GLAUDER.

Words and Music by CHAS. K. HARRIS.

Tempo di Valse.



85

1. A	lit - tle maid . . . en	climbed an old man's knee.....
2. Bright	lights were flash - ing . .	in the grand ball - room.....
3. Long	years have passed child,.....	I've nev - er wed.....



Begged	for a sto - ry -	"Do	Un - cle please.".....
Soft	ly the mu - sic,	play	ing sweet tunes.....
True	to my lost love,	though	she is dead.....



Copyright, 1900, by Chas. K. Harris & Co.

ASTORIA 7-3 FALL.

[illegible]

After the ball is over, after the crowd has gone,
 After the dancers' laughing, after the music has gone,
 Long - long in the morning, if you could feel love all,
 Like the love that once yielded to the tide.

[illegible]

(continued)

— — —

I have never loved any woman, I never will.
 "Now I am not," I said, "but once I did,
 I loved her for nothing, but I loved her,
 She loved me truly, I loved her truly.
 After the wedding, she was not true,
 She was not what she seemed to be,
 She tried to kill me once, no, twice,
 I loved her, but she was not true,
 She was a better woman than I am,
 She was her brother, the better man,
 That was the answer, no more at all.
 I love her now and will love her still.

11-12-1941

Facsimile of original manuscript of "After the Ball"

After the Ball

Why are you sin . gle; why live a . lone?.....
 There came my sweet . heart, my love, my own.....
 She . tried to tell me, tried to ex . plain;.....

Have you no ba . . . bies; have you no home?.....
 'I wish some wa . . . ter; leave me a . lone'.....
 I would not list . en, plead -- ings were vain;.....

"I had a sweet . heart, years, years a . go;.....
 When I re . turned dear there stood a man;.....
 One day a let . . . ter came from that man;.....

After the Ball. 4-2

After the Ball

Where she is now pet, you will soon know.....
 Kiss ing my sweet heart as lov - ers can.....
 He was her broth er— the let - ter ran.....

List to the sto - ry I'll tell it all.....
 Down fell the glass pet, brok - en, that's all.....
 That's why I'm lone ly, no home at all.....

I bo - lieved her faith - less af - ter the ball.....
 Just as my he was af - - ter the ball.....
 I broke her heart pet, af - ter the ball.....

After the Ball. 4-3.

After the Ball

CHORUS.

After the ball is o . . ver, after the break of morn— After tho dan . cers'

leav . ing; af-ter the stars are gone;..... Many a heart is ach . ing,

if you could read them all;..... Ma-ny the hopes that have van . ished af . . ter the

ball....

D. S. $\text{\text{ss}}$

D.S.

After the Ball 4-4.

After the Ball

goodly doses of sentiment, and invariably the whole country paused.

So there I had my *After the Ball*. My next step was to send for my arranger, Joseph Clauder, who for the sum of ten dollars would make a piano and song orchestration so that a pianist or orchestra could play the melody by notes. Clauder came over immediately. I sat at the piano, playing by ear, with Clauder beside me. He had a blank sheet of manuscript paper and a pencil in his hand. First I sang the entire song over several times in order that he might catch the rhythm, after which he transcribed each note on paper. When he had finished this procedure, Clauder, who was an accomplished musician, played the piece over; if any of the notes were wrong, I would have him correct them. I did not ask my arranger whether he thought this new ballad would make a hit or not. He merely transcribed the notes, as a matter of course. I never dreamed that the song would be a success; I had simply promised the secretary of the Wheelmen's Club to write for him something different, and there it was.

The next day Doctor came to my place and I ran over the song with him several times. He was not very enthusiastic over it, but thought it might serve the purpose. For a week both Clauder and I rehearsed this song with Doctor for the coming minstrel show. I tried to impress upon him that this ballad contained three verses and that it was essential

After the Ball

for him to sing them all, otherwise the effect of the simple story would be lost. He assured me that he would experience no trouble in that respect, as he had sung at a great many entertainments and never lost his nerve.

"So, forget it, Charles, and don't worry," he said. "You come and hear me sing it, that's all."

Incidentally, Clauder was engaged to lead the orchestra that night and I knew that part of the performance would be in good hands. However, I still kept harping on the subject of Doctor's memorizing the three verses whenever I saw him; but he only laughed at me.

At last the night for the minstrel show arrived. The Academy of Music was packed from pit to dome with Wheelmen—delegates from all quarters. They arrived with banners bearing the names of the clubs and states from which they came. A large part of the audience was naturally composed of local inhabitants. I came in quietly and sat in the last row, in an aisle seat, prepared to make a hasty exit should my new ballad be greeted with ridicule or derision.

The performnace opened with the regular minstrel first part, which went over smoothly. The third singer was Doctor, who received a generous round of applause. The interlocutor announced him as their esteemed townsman and secretary of the Wheelmen's Club, who for the first time would sing a new song

After the Ball

written expressly for him by Charles K. Harris, of Milwaukee. Clauder started the introduction with the orchestra.

Doctor strutted down to the front of the stage and sang the first verse, followed by the chorus. A round of applause greeted him. He sang the second verse and chorus without a hitch; and then came the fatal third verse, when my worst fears were realized. Doctor hesitated for a moment, stammered, and forgot the beginning of the third verse. The audience started to titter, then laughed, and finally applauded. Meanwhile Doctor stood there like a bump on a log, while the orchestra kept softly playing the music over and over again in hopes that he would collect his wits and remember the third verse. But, alas, it was useless; the man who could memorize a song in a few hours and never break down met his Waterloo and, deeply embarrassed, he was compelled to sit down without finishing the ballad. I immediately clutched my hat, silently stole out of the theater, and firmly resolved that never again shall an amateur singer introduce any new song of mine—and to this day I have kept that resolution.

The morning after the fiasco found me very much dejected in my office. An acquaintance dropped in to see me. He said that he and his family had attended the Wheelmen's Club entertainment the night before and were much impressed with *After the Ball* and that his wife had requested him to see me

After the Ball

and get the complete story, especially the ending, so that she could learn what it was all about.

"Stop kidding," said I.

"Why, no, Charles, I mean it," said he.

So I sat down at the piano and sang the three verses. As I turned to ask his opinion as to the merit of this ballad, I saw tears in his eyes. He hurriedly arose and left my place in silence. I wondered if it was my bum singing that had so affected him. Fifteen minutes later he returned to say that the song had taken such a hold on him that he had walked around the block to compose himself. He then assured me that *After the Ball* was bound to be a big success. This enabled me to pluck up a little courage, and I decided to tackle every singer, male or female, who appeared in Milwaukee. However, it was difficult sledging, as the town boasted of only three theaters. There the situation stood. By personal effort I had induced Bessie Bonehill to sing *Kiss and Let's Make Up*, and I made up my mind to follow the same tactics, wherever possible, with *After the Ball*.

In order to acquaint performers visiting our town with my new composition it became necessary for me to print what are known as professional copies. These are not the regular piano copies that are purchased by the public, but another kind, printed on a cheaper grade of paper and given gratis to the performer. If the latter likes the composition, he

After the Ball

memorizes it and uses it as one of his numbers while entertaining on the stage. If it does not appeal to him, he thrusts it aside. This practice still prevails today, and many of our greatest popular melodies first see the light of day in this fashion. Although I continued publishing songs during all that time, they failed to bring me a reasonable income; hence I always fell back on teaching the banjo. It was only by the greatest self-denial that I managed to have professional copies of *After the Ball* printed.

The first singer I approached was May Howard, of the Howard Burlesque Company, who was singing a song entitled *Is There a Letter Here for Me?*—a pretty sentimental ballad by a composer unknown to me. She was really endowed with an excellent voice. At that time only men were admitted to this theater. Boys walked up and down the aisles selling all kinds of drinks, cigars, and the like. Despite this environment, the audience enjoyed this sort of ballad.

I saw Miss Howard and her husband, Harry Morris, the leading German comedian of the burlesque extravaganza, emerge from the stage entrance. Cornering them, I pleaded with them to come to my office the next morning to hear my new song. They both were very courteous and promised faithfully to come. Promptly at eleven o'clock next day they strolled into my office. I sang *After the Ball* for them, and when I reached the line in the second



Charles K. Harris at the time he wrote "After the Ball"

After the Ball

verse, "Down fell the glass, pet, broken, that's all," Miss Howard burst into laughter and said that if she ever attempted to sing that song in any burlesque theater where they all drank beer, half the audience would drop their glasses on the floor just for the fun of it. She suggested that if I eliminated the second verse containing the objectionable line, condensed my song to two verses and a chorus, she would sing it.

I told Miss Howard that that one line was going to make the song a big hit. She laughed and said I meant it would kill the song, and that unless I changed it, she must decline to sing it. With these few words, they left my office.¹

Undismayed, I waited patiently. Shortly afterward the Primrose & West Minstrels came to the Davidson Theater, with such singers as Dick José, Joe Natus, and Raymond Moore. José was the best ballad singer ever known to minstrelsy, with a tenor voice similar to John McCormack's. He was then singing my song *Kiss and Let's Make Up*. I sent for him and played *After the Ball*. When I had sung the last word, José contended that it was impossible for a composer to write more than one successful number in his lifetime. He conceded that *Kiss and Let's Make Up* was the successful number and suggested that I push that song in preference to *After*

¹ I might add in this connection that, from the time I revised my original manuscript of *After the Ball* to the present day, not a word or line has been changed in that song.

After the Ball

the Ball. Nevertheless, I pinned my faith on the latter.

Raymond Moore was singing *Mary and John*, which never failed to bring him instantaneous applause. When I suggested the Ball song, he argued—and rightly so—that it would be futile for him to change; and also that in the middle of the season, as long as his song was making good, the management would probably frown upon the idea.

And so on and on it went down the line, singer after singer offering the excuses: "Too long," "Too draggy," "Too much story," "Condense it and I will sing it." Then along came Clark's Burlesquers with Annie Whitney as their leading prima donna. She possessed a voice as charming as any of the leading musical-comedy stars today. I sang the song for her, and when I completed it she seemed much impressed. She promised to learn it and have her orchestra leader make an orchestration, so as to have it ready for the opening night of the show in Providence, Rhode Island, three weeks from that day. She was the first woman professional to sing *After the Ball*.

While Miss Whitney was singing it in Providence, May Irwin was appearing in vaudeville, together with her sister Flo, in Tony Pastor's big vaudeville company, then touring the East under the name of the Irwin Sisters. Someone called Miss Irwin's attention to a song that was being successfully sung in



1



2



3



4

- (1) Sadie Cushman singing "Always in the Way"
 (2) Irene Franklin in "The Emigrant" (age 7)
 (3) Adah Richmond in the song hit "Cast Aside"
 (4) Annie Whitney Latona who sang "After the Ball"

After the Ball

the burlesque theaters. Miss Irwin made a matinée one day in time to hear Miss Whitney sing *After the Ball*. She went back of the stage and introduced herself. Generous-hearted Miss Whitney accommodated her with one of her own orchestrations and a copy of the song.

I learned afterwards that when Miss Irwin sang the song in New York it created a tremendous sensation. At the time I knew nothing of what was going on in the East. It was before the days of the radio and the wireless; telegraph tolls were very steep, and actors as a rule were poor correspondents.

And then along came the famous Hoyt's "A Trip to Chinatown," playing at the Bijou Theater, Milwaukee, owned by Jacob Litt, who later produced the famous play "In Old Kentucky." Included in the cast of "A Trip to Chinatown" were my friend Julius P. Witmark, known as the Boy Tenor; Harry Connors, comedian; Laura Biggar, as the widow; and a splendid barytone singer named James Aldrich Libby.

As correspondent of the New York *Dramatic News*, I had entrée to all the theaters, so I attended the opening performance and had the pleasure of hearing Mr. Libby sing.

The company manager at the time was Ben Singer, a friend of mine. Meeting Singer after the show, I told him how Mr. Libby's voice had impressed me and that I would like to have him sing one of my new

After the Ball

songs. Singer told me that he thought it would be impossible, for the simple reason that Percy Gaunt was under contract to supply all musical numbers for all the shows. By the way, it was this same Gaunt who had immortalized the Bowery in New York with his song *On the Bowery*, which he had introduced into Hoyt's play.

However, with Libby it was different in those days, I discovered. He possessed the temperament of a grand-opera song bird and was allowed to sing anything he chose. Singer told me that if I was very persuasive I might be able to sway Libby. This was an opportunity too good to miss. Here was the famous James Aldrich Libby in Milwaukee; how was I to induce him to sing *After the Ball*?

I told Singer that in my official capacity with the New York *Dramatic News* I could give Libby a write-up in that paper. Singer told this to Libby, and early Monday morning the latter walked into my office. In the course of the interview I softly told him I was a song writer besides being a newspaper correspondent, showing him printed copies of several of my publications, and adding that I had just written a new ballad entitled *After the Ball*. He said it was a good title, but was sorry that he never sang a published number.

"But this one is in manuscript form," said I.

My heart beat rapidly as I fished out the manu-

After the Ball

script copy of *After the Ball* that Sam Doctor had used. I did not show him a professional copy, though one had been printed, for this would have given him the impression that the song had been hawked about. He took up the manuscript and sang the song without a hitch.

I can still picture him as he said, "Great song, Harris! I will put it on Wednesday matinée. Make an orchestration for me in the key of B."

To be on the safe side, I told him I thought it would be better if he were to send over his orchestra leader to make a special arrangement at my expense, and he agreed.

The leader was Frank Palma. He came to my office and told me that an orchestra rehearsal had been called for the following Wednesday. I gave him the order to make the parts in the key desired by Libby. Then, highly elated, I hastened over to see Ben Singer, my friend, the manager of "A Trip to Chinatown," and told him the good news. He promised to aid me in every possible way. When Palma brought the bill for arranging the orchestration, which was five dollars, I confessed to him that I did not have the price.

"Oh, that's all right, Harris. Give me a cigar and I'll call it square."

Bless his kind heart, I never forgot that favor.

There was a young reporter, Eddie Dillon, then employed on the *Daily News*, who promised to write

After the Ball

up the song. I had induced him to accompany me to the matinée at the Bijou Theater because the great Libby was going to sing my new song, *After the Ball*. A matinée audience filling every seat greeted the players. Dillon and I were compelled to find standing room in the aisle near the wall. I felt my knees trembling as the opening overture was being played. The curtain rose for the first act, which went off smoothly.

Then came the Chinatown scene, in the second act, in which Libby walked out to the footlights in full evening dress. The orchestra commenced playing the introduction to the song, and then Libby, in his magnificent, clear, high barytone voice, sang the first verse and chorus. When he finished not a sound was heard. I was ready to sink through the floor. He then went through the second verse and the chorus, and again complete silence reigned. I was making ready to bolt, but my friend Dillon held me tightly by the arm. Then came the third verse and chorus. For a full minute the audience remained quiet, and then broke loose with applause.

After all these years, that matinée stands vividly fixed in my memory. The entire audience arose and, standing, wildly applauded for fully five minutes.

Libby's entire supporting company, including Julius Witmark, Laura Biggar, and Harry Connors, emerged from the wings and also applauded the



Compliments to my dear
friend - Charles N. Libby
Your sincere friend
J. Aldrich Libby

J. Aldrich Libby

After the Ball

singer in full view of the audience. Libby was compelled to sing the chorus at least six times over. When the audience had filed out after the performance the players pleaded with Frank Palma to hold the orchestra for a repetition of the instrumentation.

I met Julius Witmark after the show, and he accompanied me to my brother Harry's place of business to confirm the news of the song's success. He offered to wire his brother Isidor, in New York, to forward me a draft for \$10,000 for the complete rights to the song. This offer startled my brother, who advised me to accept it at once lest Witmark change his mind; but I declined. I reasoned that if it was worth \$10,000 to Witmark & Sons, it should certainly be worth double that amount to me.

When Hoyt's "A Trip to Chinatown" left Milwaukee to tour the East, orders for the song kept piling in, although the ballad was not yet in press, and I had just made up my mind to publish it. A postal card dated April first came from the Oliver Ditson Company, of Boston, one of the largest publishers of sacred and classical music in America, with agencies in New York and Chicago. It read:

"Send 75,000 copies of *After the Ball* immediately—25,000 to Boston, 25,000 to New York office, and 25,000 to Lyon & Healy, Chicago."

This was too good to be true, I thought. Glancing at the date again, I decided it was an April-fool joke. I tore up the postal and threw it in the waste-

After the Ball

basket. Ten days later came a wire from the same firm, reading:

“Have you shipped the order for *After the Ball*? When and where? Answer immediately.”

Then it dawned upon me that the post card was not a joke, but a bona-fide order.

CHAPTER IV

A Surprise for Mother

A Check Harry Couldn't Cash—A Fortune from a Song—Some Episodes—The World Fair—An Impromptu Reception—An Enterprising Reporter.

THE telegram from the Ditson Company was, indeed, a bona-fide order. Seventy-five thousand copies of *After the Ball* had to be supplied immediately. And that constituted a serious problem. At that time there was no concern in Milwaukee capable of printing 75,000 copies of the song. My printers, Pollworth & Brother, had only one handpress. I rushed over to see one Pat Shannon, proprietor of the Riverside Show Printing Company, of Milwaukee, told him my troubles, and showed him the wire I had received from the Ditson Company. When Shannon learned that I had the plates of the song, but no title page, he gave me a letter to a firm of music printers in Chicago, Hack & Anderson, and advised me to see them without delay. When I told him that I had no money to make this outlay, Shannon said that he had arranged in his letter that I compensate the printers from Ditson's payment to me.

After the Ball

I rushed home to my mother, who immediately advanced me the railroad fare to Chicago. Two hours later found me at the above-mentioned printing establishment with the plates of *After the Ball* tucked under my arm. I handed Shannon's letter, together with the plates, to the printer. The latter, a short, wiry Scotchman, after glancing over the letter and the plates, asked for my title page. On learning that I had none, he suggested that I draw one then and there. The result was a simple affair, containing the title of the ballad, name of the author, and the publisher's imprint. The elaborate and illustrated title page of today had not yet come into vogue.

Before the printer accepted my order I showed him Ditson's telegram. This proving satisfactory to him, he undertook to express the 75,000 copies as directed. He also promised to have the order completed within ten days. The transaction was all over in about ten minutes, and I took the next train home.

A fortnight later the Ditson company sent me a check in full payment for the 75,000 copies, which amounted to \$14,250. I had never seen so much money before in my life. I took the check over to my brother Harry and said I would like to have it cashed so that I could pay my mother my board bill for the week. "Certainly," said Harry, and I handed the check to him. He glanced at it carelessly and, seeing the figure fourteen, counted out

A Surprise for Mother

fourteen dollars. I counted over the money and said I thought he was a little shy. Taking up the check again, my brother glanced over it carefully. He almost collapsed. Needless to say, he could not cash it.

As orders were pouring in from all over the United States, I immediately placed an additional order for 100,000 copies.

I still occupied the small office at 207 Grand Avenue. There were adjoining offices occupied by real-estate agents, physicians, and dentists. They all offered to assist me during the evening to fill the orders that were piling in, and so for one full week they worked like Trojans with me. The dentist would read over the orders, the physician would count the copies, the real-estate agent would wrap the packages, while I attended to the billing. I would send out for the beer that made Milwaukee famous, as well as for sandwiches, and how those boys did work and seem to enjoy it!

It was not long before the order for the 100,000 copies became exhausted, when I walked a sales agent representing one of the largest manufacturers of printing presses in America. He showed me photographs and designs of the most modern presses for the printing of music. After consulting my local printers, I purchased one of these machines and ordered it set up in their establishment. For the next twenty years Pollworth & Brothers did all my

After the Ball

printing, and today their plant is one of the largest in Milwaukee.

By that time *After the Ball* had caught on everywhere, necessitating extra sets of plates for the song and a new title page, which displayed the photograph of James Aldrich Libby.

Money kept flowing in, and I placed it in several banks as fast as it was received. I also rented a large box in a safety-deposit vault and put the currency there until such time as I could invest it safely. I had at that time about \$75,000 in currency lying idle in the vault, which was a lot of money in those days, especially for Milwaukee. No one knew that I had the money or that any such amount could accrue from the sale of a single song.

One day one of my former banjo pupils, George B. Nash, whose brother was cashier of the First National Bank of Milwaukee, came into my office and offered me the princely sum of five dollars for playing the banjo at a party to be given by his sister that evening. Feeling certain that his brother Charles would be present that night, I consented to go, in order that I might solicit his advice as to investing my surplus capital. It tickled my sense of humor to make five dollars at that time, with \$75,000 in my safety-deposit box, although six months previously it would have been a godsend.

I made my appearance that evening and sang and played for the guests, as I used to do. When I was

A Surprise for Mother

through and George had paid me the five-spot, I asked him to take me in to his brother, whom I had seen playing a game of chess in the library with a prominent Milwaukee judge. He gladly did so. I told Mr. Nash that I was desirous of investing some money I had saved and I sought his advice regarding the investment. Thinking I had \$100 or so to invest, he smilingly said it was fine that I saved my money while I was young and suggested that I see him at the bank the next day.

Arriving at the bank the following afternoon, I was ushered into his private office. I started in at once by asking for the best investment in the world, regardless of interest, provided that it safeguarded my principal. Nash informed me that the best and safest investment was a government bond, though, of course, it would not pay me much interest—not so much as first mortgages on real estate or railroad bonds. Continuing the conversation, he told me of a new government-bond issue which paid $2\frac{1}{2}$ per cent, net. Then turning to me with a twinkle in his eye, he asked me how many I wished ordered. I replied calmly that I wanted fifty.

“Good heavens, my boy!” he cried. “That means a cash investment of \$52,500.”

I told him I knew that, but I wanted the bonds, and asked that he kindly order them for me.

“But where is the currency coming from?” he asked.

After the Ball

"From my safety-deposit box, a block away," said I.

He decided to humor me, as he told me later, thinking I had lost my mind. So he directed one of his assistants to accompany me to the safety-deposit vault. The assistant carried a large canvas bag and we walked together to the box, where I tossed \$52,500 into the bag. The money was tied up in bundles, with the amounts displayed upon each wrapper. The assistant locked his bag and, side by side, we walked back to the First National Bank.

We got there just as Nash was leaving for the day, he never dreaming for an instant that I would return. He looked at us in surprise as we planked the bag on the table, unlocked the padlock, and drew forth the currency. I have never forgotten the look of astonishment on Nash's face. With an inquiring look at me, he asked whether I had robbed a bank or held up a train. I then told him the story of my ballad, and after I had finished he said it seemed incredible that a simple little song could earn so much money. He seemed even more surprised when I told him that this represented only a small part of my earnings—that the money was still coming in at the rate of \$1000 a day. He gave me a receipt for the money, and within ten days the bonds were delivered to me and placed safely in my safety-deposit box.

Money flowed into my hands so fast that my im-

A Surprise for Mother

mediate family was unaware of it. At that time ours was the typical growing, hard-working family, in more or less modest circumstances. Though our necessary wants were satisfied, we enjoyed few luxuries. Every dollar that my brothers, sisters, and I had previously turned over to our mother was fully appraised. Hence when Dame Fortune smiled upon me I was on the point of letting my mother know immediately; but, on reflection, I decided to surprise her in a far more substantial manner. I recalled that our home furnishings, though still serviceable, had been purchased many years before.

How well I remember the parlor where I taught my pupils to play the banjo day after day, the worn Brussels carpet on the floor, the old square piano for which we children were paying on the installment plan for many years, the regulation white lace curtains, with chenille draperies, and the old, red plush furniture. Also the dining-room set in oak, with a sideboard that had seen better days, and the oak chairs, with their cane bottoms. The hall, with its plain hatrack and small strip of rag carpet. I remember mother's room, with its old walnut bed, which father bought before the Civil War; and my sisters' rooms also, with modest oak furniture; my bedroom in cheap oak, with a washstand, a small rug on the floor, a flowered muslin curtain at the window.

I had decided to clean out the house at one sweep, but neither mother nor anyone else in the family

After the Ball

must know anything of it. My brothers and sisters were all working at the time and, consequently, were never home during the day. Going to the best house-furnishing establishment in Milwaukee at the time, I asked them to send an interior decorator to measure the rooms for carpets, rugs, curtains, and draperies. I went also to the largest furniture dealer in the city and ordered the most expensive furniture. I also ordered an upright piano to replace the old tin-pan square instrument.

That Saturday afternoon I arranged to send my mother to a *matinée*. I therefore had the house to myself. The decorator arrived and made his estimate. I warned him not to forget anything. A few days later he sent for me and showed me the plans, which appealed to me. I was told that it would take two hours to lay the carpets and hang the drapes. After the carpets were laid the furniture could be moved in. I instructed them to have everything ready for the following Saturday.

Again I sent my mother to a *matinée*. At two o'clock sharp two large vans came to the house. I had also engaged four men to assist me in moving the old furniture and carpets to the woodshed in our back yard. The men soon had the old carpets up and the furniture out. The new carpets went down, the draperies went up, and the furniture was brought in, the new upright piano was installed. To me it was as though Aladdin's wonderful lamp had been

A Surprise for Mother

rubbed and the genii had ordered things about—it had all been done so quickly. A new hatrack was in place, with beaded portières separating the hall from the parlor; a blue velvet carpet had been laid in the parlor, with silk draperies and an exquisite scarf on the upright piano to match, with mahogany chairs of the latest design, upholstered in blue velvet. The dining-room was in dark Flemish oak, then prevalent in the best homes. There was a long side-board, with table and chairs to match; also a china closet. Mother's room, I recall, was in mahogany. In lieu of a carpet, a beautiful Turkish rug was spread on the floor. My sisters' rooms contained curly-birch furniture, with pink silk drapes; Turkish rugs also covered the floors. I had not overlooked engaging a maid, and thoroughly posted her.

I then waited for mother. A little after five o'clock I heard her footsteps on the front steps leading to the door. I hid behind the parlor curtains, where I could get a peek at her face. The maid opened the door. My mother first noticed the new maid, then the Turkish runner on the hall floor, and the new hatrack. For a moment she hesitated—even walked to the door again and looked up at the number of the house, thinking that perhaps she had come into the wrong place; but the maid's smiling face reassured her—"Come right in, Mrs. Harris. This is the place." Like one in a dream, mother gazed about her.

After the Ball

I ran from behind the curtains and like a youngster yelled, "Surprise!" Then I took her by the arm and marched her through the rooms. Her delighted expression was quite enough compensation for me. The first words she uttered were to the effect that she failed to understand where the money was to come from to pay for these beautiful things. By placing the receipted bills in her hands I convinced her that these furnishings were paid for. However, I then related to her how I came into the money and how I had successfully invested it. I doubt if even to the day of her death she quite realized how it all came about.

Every evening at 7:30 I would call on my brother Harry, who owned a small jewelry shop, and remain with him until closing time. Then we would go to a restaurant and perhaps to a theatrical performance to spend the evening. I remember a very sultry night in July, when the city was laying a new pavement on my brother's street. While my brother attended to a customer, I sat down on the curb, with my coat beside me and my feet dangling, until a little darky bootblack called Bingo, who always blackened my shoes, came along. Having nothing else to occupy my mind, I engaged him in conversation. Like all little coons of his type, he was very sociable. He told me that if he had a little more cash he knew where a small place in the alley could be rented for a bootblack stand. He would then not have to roam



Chas. K. Harris (7 years of age) and his mother

A Surprise for Mother

about for customers; but alas, he had no capital. Now, I really had taken a fancy to Bingo because he seemed industrious. I gave him a written order to a carpenter to construct for him the bootblack stand and wrote an order for the necessary supplies. At this his eyes sparkled, but his voice failed him. All he could mutter repeatedly was, "Tank youse, Mr. Harris. You sure is a good spoht."

Just before Bingo left, a diamond salesman from New York was discussing business with my brother Harry, when casually he inquired of Harry whether he was related to that fellow Harris who wrote *After the Ball*. When my brother answered in the affirmative, this drummer was difficult to convince. He went so far as to insinuate that all song writers had swelled heads, judging by those he had met in New York, especially after having written a smashing hit. And while I was engrossed with the matter of Bingo's future, my brother purposely pointed to me as a refutation of his theory.

The man looked at me in surprise. Harry beckoned me to come to him. I arose from the curb, brushed off my clothes, and told Bingo to hurry off on his mission, and then walked up to Harry and the salesman. I was introduced. The drummer gazed askance at me for a moment, as though I was a curiosity. He was dressed in the latest fashion. I must confess that I surely looked a sorry sight beside this diamond salesman.

After the Ball

I can remember him saying, "So you are Charles K. Harris, author of *After the Ball*. If I told my friends back East how I met you, they surely would not believe me. I expected to see a stylish young chap all swelled out of shape."

I laughed, saying he should see me in my Sunday raiment.

At that time the World's Fair in Chicago was in full swing, with The Midway Plaisance as its big sensation. Every man, woman, and child who attended the fair spent nearly all his time on the Plaisance, where John Philip Sousa's big band was one of the reigning attractions. I had been notified that Sousa's band was playing *After the Ball*. Every Saturday I left for Chicago, called for a certain little Southern girl living there, and we would take in the fair together. I doubt if we witnessed any part of the fair except the Midway, which afforded enough excitement to last a lifetime.

On one of those memorable afternoons we sat in front of the band stand to listen to Sousa's band. He played his famous Washington Post March, always a favorite with audiences. Then someone walked up to him with a request for *After the Ball*. When it was finished I strolled up to him and introduced myself.

His good-natured greeting was: "Confound you, Harris, the playing of your song has tired me out!"

A Surprise for Mother

If you don't believe me, stand here for a few minutes and I will show you."

Even while I was conversing with him a lady came to him with a card in her hand. Without looking at the card, Sousa offered to wager me it was for *After the Ball*. He turned the card over to me, and it read: "After the Ball." A dozen cards were handed to him while I stood there, all requesting the same song. Inwardly he earned my sympathy.

I never failed to give John Philip Sousa due credit for popularizing my song, for there were thousands of visitors to the World's Fair who heard Sousa's band play the song as only he could render it. They would then invariably buy copies in Chicago's music stores to take back home with them, to show the home folks the reigning song success of the World's Fair. That was one of the reasons why the song spread throughout the world as no ballad of its kind had ever done before. It has been translated into almost every known language.

Another incident I recall of the fair was the occasion when we wandered into the German Village for coffee and cake. This Village was the largest restaurant located on the Midway, and it accommodated 5000 guests. There was a band of forty musicians, all young ladies, its only male member being the leader. While we were partaking of our refreshments they played *After the Ball*. It has

After the Ball

always been a custom of mine, when an orchestra plays one of my compositions and I am present, to send up a waiter and ask the band what they will have on me as a compliment for playing my music; and I did so in this instance.

When the band had been supplied, my waiter pointed me out to the leader. The women all held up their glasses and drank to my health. Meanwhile the leader, a little high-strung German, had taken a good look at me and walked over to my table. After introducing himself he said I looked very familiar to him and that perhaps we had met before. I told him that he was in error, as I was a stranger in Chicago. Then, suddenly extracting from his pocket a copy of *After the Ball* containing a photograph of myself on the outside page, which I used as a trade-mark, he exclaimed in a loud voice that I was without doubt Charles K. Harris, the author of that song. Calling to his wife and several of his daughters, who were in the band, he motioned them to come over and meet the man who had written *After the Ball*. Not only did they hasten toward me, but they brought the entire audience along with them. My fiancée and I were compelled to climb up on the table to avoid being crushed. However, I had to say a few words, which were greeted with cheers, before we finally made our way out of the Village.

Leaving for home the next day, I entered, as usual,

A Surprise for Mother

the smoking car, and read a newspaper until the train reached Milwaukee—an hour and three-quarters' trip. A spry young fellow came in and sat down beside me. Pulling out a cigar, he asked for a match, and then started to whistle *After the Ball*. I looked at him to see if he had recognized me or if I knew him; but he was a total stranger to me, and so I resumed my reading. Bent upon starting a conversation, he turned to me suddenly and remarked what a wonderful tune that was and what a sensation the song was making.

"I would like to meet this fellow Harris just to see what he looks like."

"I know him very well," said I.

"Do you?" said he. "Please tell me something about him. You see, my sister in Chicago is a music teacher and quite a singer. She is interested in Mr. Harris' songs. I'm on my way to Minneapolis on a business trip and would like to inform her, when I return, all about this fellow Harris."

"Well," I said, "he is an ordinary-looking chap, about my size. I went to school with him, slept with him, ate with him, joined him in baseball games, and was with him when he wrote a great many of his best songs."

"How interesting! But tell me," said he, "how did he happen to write *After the Ball*?"

I laid down my newspaper and told him all about it. He was one of the most interested listeners I

After the Ball

ever met. When we reached Milwaukee he thanked me and went on his way.

I gave this matter very little thought until the next morning. When I took up the *Chicago Daily News*, which came regularly to my office, I was taken aback with surprise to find in it an account of how Charles K. Harris came to write *After the Ball*. It was a special article relating how I had visited the German Village and had been almost mobbed, and a lot of other stories regarding the song. The young fellow whose acquaintance I had formed on the train was a wide-awake reporter; he also had been in the crowd in the German Village. He discovered the hotel where I was stopping and asked the clerk what time I intended leaving for Milwaukee. So he took the same train and pumped me dry. At the time I considered it rather a clever stunt.

CHAPTER V

Good Friends in Showland

The Tombstone Club—How I Stopped a Run—Expanding My Publishing Plant—The Four Cohans—Miss May Yohe—I Publish Some Coon Songs—I Discover a Prima Donna—Meeting Sam Scribner, Louis Werba and Gustav Luders.

ONE morning while I was in my office, engaged in the pleasant task of opening mail containing either drafts and orders for *After the Ball*, my brother-in-law, Joe Horwitz, brother of Charles Horwitz, the song writer and actor, entered. He was in the insurance, real-estate, and loan business on a small scale. Even he was unaware of the true state of my affairs at the time.

In the course of our conversation he mentioned that if there was anyone at that time possessing ready cash, he knew how that individual could make a tidy profit. When I became inquisitive, he related to me the case of a contractor named John Martin who had come to him with \$35,000 of city certificates which he offered to sell for \$30,000 cash, thus promising to yield the purchaser a profit of \$5000 within

After the Ball

three months, when these certificates would mature. Totally ignorant about this branch of finance, I asked for further information concerning these certificates.

My brother-in-law explained that the city had ordered pavements to be put on the streets. Whoever owned a home was assessed for this improvement when taxes came due. Banks usually accepted these certificates and discounted them. When tax time came any person in default paid 10, 15 or 20 per cent interest until the assessment was paid. Owing to the tightness of the money market, the banks had refused Martin a loan, and he was looking for someone who had enough money to take these certificates off his hands in order to pay his workmen. I suggested to my brother-in-law that he return the next day, intimating that I might have someone present then who would be tempted to purchase Martin's certificates.

At dinner that evening I talked the matter over with my brother Joe, two years my junior, who was the assistant city clerk of Milwaukee. When I consulted him about these certificates, Joe assured me that they were the best investment in the world and wished that he personally had enough money to buy them. I asked also what the procedure was in case of purchasing, which he explained to me. Never for a moment did he think that I desired this information for my personal use.

The following morning I went over to the vault, took out currency amounting to \$30,000, and de-

Good Friends in Showland

posited it in the Plankinton Bank. When my brother-in-law walked into my office with Martin, the contractor, and saw me alone, a look of disappointment crept over his face. Furthermore, he became puzzled when I asked Martin to allow me to examine the certificates. I added them up and found that they totaled exactly \$35,000, and, to make sure, I asked what was Martin's price for them. On being told \$30,000, I ordered Martin to indorse the certificates on the back to Charles K. Harris and then made out the check for the amount. This was too much for my brother-in-law, who thought I was overplaying the little drama; but when he saw that I was serious in the matter, he said: "Have you really got that much in the bank?"

With that remark, Martin's suspicions were aroused and he declined to accept my check until he communicated with the bank.

"All right," said I, "call them up." And picking up the telephone, he communicated with the cashier of the bank, who vouched for my check.

What an amazed look my brother-in-law wore when he discovered I really possessed that amount of money! The deal was consummated, and I placed the certificates in my safety-deposit box. I also gave a check for \$1000 commission to my brother-in-law, the largest he had ever received. And then I was again compelled to explain to Joe how I had made all that money.

After the Ball

About this time I became acquainted with many newspaper men in the city. We would often meet at the Palm Garden, owned by the Schlitz Brewing Company. We would usually sit around and chat about the shows, and frequently would have some of the actors playing in the city join us. My old friend Hal Coleman, of *Der Herold*, suggested that we rent a room and start a little club of our own, where we could do our entertaining. He was appointed a committee of one to look for quarters, which he located beneath a saloon and restaurant, right off Grand Avenue, the main street, and in the heart of the theatrical district. It was a commodious cellar. The proprietor had a dumb-waiter built in from the saloon to the cellar so that he could take care of our wants.

A committee was formed of James P. Keene, dramatic editor of the Milwaukee *Sentinel*; John R. Wolf, correspondent of the New York *World*; Joe O'Malley, press representative for the Bijou Theatre; Pop Flanders, editor of Peck's *Sun*; myself and a few others, to go over the idea of making this room in the cellar truly unique. We arranged to cover the walls with white canvas and then procured the services of scenic painters from the various theaters to paint the walls with graveyard scenes, skeletons—everything as weird as possible. A long table was built in the shape of a coffin. The top of the table at which the president sat would lift up to

Good Friends in Showland

disclose the wax figure of a male, donated by a member, in full evening dress.

The same donor, Jacob Litt, presented us also with other wax figures, one of which we placed underneath the table, and the other, representing a policeman with night stick uplifted, stood guard at the entrance. The chairs were straight-backed, shaped like tombstones, with painted skulls. At the lower end of the table was a skull attached to a wire which extended to the president's chair. When this wire was jerked, the skull would open, showing the interior filled with smokes. Even the beer steins had skulls painted on them. Sawdust covered the floor.

This group was incorporated under the name of the Tombstone Club. One of the Club's inflexible rules was that no woman should ever cross its threshold. As chairman of the entertainment committee, I always invited such members of the theatrical profession as were appearing in the city at the time. An invitation bearing a figure of a tombstone would usually be sent to each of them at the theatre. Among those entertained were David Warfield, Primrose and West and their minstrel company, George Francis Train, Gus Williams, James J. Corbett, Signor Trentanove, the Italian sculptor, James J. Brady, and many prominent managers in the profession who happened to be passing through Milwaukee.

I recall one amusing incident, concerning a gentleman who walked into my office one summer morn-

After the Ball

ing and handed me his card. He was attired in a yachting costume consisting of a white shirt, white trousers, white canvas shoes, and a yachting cap. His card read: "Archibald Clavering Gunther, author of *Mr. Barnes of New York* and *Mr. Potter of Texas*." I certainly was very pleased to meet so distinguished an author. He said he had come direct from Oconomowoc, where he had his yacht moored for the summer. He said also that he wished to meet the author of *After the Ball*. When I asked him how long he expected to remain in our city, he replied that he was departing that night. I invited him to be my guest at the Tombstone Club. He said he had heard of that club and was anxious to see it. I made arrangements to meet him that evening at the Plankinton House and escort him to the club. I 'phoned to Pop Flanders, when Mr. Gunther left, and told him I had a celebrity for the boys to entertain at the Club that evening—none other than Archibald Clavering Gunther. Pop was delighted and promised to call a meeting of the members that evening.

That evening found both Mr. Gunther and myself at the Club, where the former was greeted by its full membership. After the usual entertainment, we sat down and partook of refreshments. Gunther was delighted with the surroundings and observed each painting with apparent delight. An old tombstone had been placed in the corner of the room, above a

Good Friends in Showland

mound of earth representing a grave, and on top of this tombstone was a stuffed black hawk, a rather gruesome affair. Gunther expressed his deep interest in it all.

"By the way, Mr. Gunther," inquired one of the members, "how did you happen to conceive the idea of *Mr. Barnes of New York?*"

Good-naturedly Mr. Gunther launched into the tale of how he had written that story and his other famous success, *Mr. Potter of Texas*. Willingly and concisely, he answered every question put to him by various members.

The entire club saw him off on the train at three o'clock the next morning, and we all voted him a jolly good fellow and hoped he would favor us with another visit in the near future. On returning, I was congratulated by the members for introducing this well-known guest to the Club. Most of the members being newspaper men, they saw to it that the dailies on the following day mentioned Gunther's visit to the Tombstone Club.

Two weeks later I received a letter from a physician in Waupaca, a small town near Milwaukee, who wrote me that he had been entertaining Mr. Archibald Clavering Gunther, the celebrated author; that he, Gunther, had been courting his daughter and had used my name for reference. Hence this letter to me. Though somewhat puzzled, I was on the point of replying favorably when,

After the Ball

glancing at a morning paper's special dispatch from Oconomowoc, I read that a man representing himself as Archibald Clavering Gunther, the novelist, had been exposed as an impostor there that very day; that, without his knowledge, several young society girls, doubting his identity, had written to his publishers for a photograph. The photograph was received, together with a letter from the publishers notifying the young ladies that the real Mr. Gunther was in Europe. I thereupon clipped this dispatch and forwarded it to the physician in Waupaca.

The next night at the Club the boys all joshed me, but I really thought the joke was on them as well. They had been gullible enough to sit for three hours asking the impostor questions without becoming suspicious. Following this experience, we decided to be more careful in the future as to whom we entertained at the Club.

It was never known until years after who started the bank panic in Milwaukee back in 1893. It really originated in the Tombstone Club. Pop Flanders, our club president, and editor of Peck's *Sun*, called a special meeting one Saturday night; which our full membership attended. Pop was always a jolly fellow, but he seemed solemn that evening and told us that he had inside information that the Plankinton Bank was in dire circumstances. He said its president had loaned a certain local depart-

Good Friends in Showland

ment store more than one million dollars without security, and that he, Flanders, intended to expose that loan in the next edition of the *Sun*. Although it would create a turmoil in the city, a scare was preferable to having depositors lose their money. At that time I kept a large deposit in that bank, and Flanders warned me to withdraw my money on the following Monday. I profited by his advice and withdrew all but a few hundred dollars.

"I may be arrested for causing a panic," he said, "so I shall need a bondsman. How about it, Charles?"

"Go ahead, Pop," said I. "I'll back you to the limit."

On Sunday came the big exposure in the *Sun*. It created a run on the Plankinton Bank which it was unable to withstand. Three other banks in quick succession also went by the board. Nothing like it had ever happened in the city.

Although I was without a bank, money was still pouring into my office; but, as banks were not sure to open the next morning, no one made deposits. There came another check from the Oliver Ditson Company for \$12,000. Not wishing to deposit it in any of the remaining banks, I hied myself to my friend William Dodsworth, manager of the American Express Company in Milwaukee, and explained my predicament. He suggested having the express company collect it for me and deliver the cash at my

After the Ball

office. Two weeks later three men, with bags slung over their shoulders, stamped into my office and put the bags on the floor. Gazing in surprise at them, I asked what the bags contained. The men told me that they contained money shipped from Boston.

When the men had left, I opened all the bags and discovered that they contained nothing but silver dollars—12,000 in all. It seemed that out-of-town banks realized the panicky condition in Milwaukee and knew that if they sent me currency I could very easily place it in my vault, while coin I would be compelled to deposit in a bank.

Only two banks out of six in the city were doing business. One of them was a private bank, Marshall & Isley. I decided to take a long chance and deposit my money there. I engaged an express wagon, and, with the help of my shipping clerk and bookkeeper, carried the bags down to the wagon. We rode through the streets, each of us sitting on a bag, while the crowd looked at us in astonishment, to Marshall & Isley's Bank, where a line of depositors had already gathered to withdraw their money. My pulse quickened as I took in the situation, but I was determined to chance making a deposit in the bank.

The line of waiting men and women, most of whom knew me, looked at us in surprise when they saw us carrying large bags into the bank. Many of the depositors warned me not to deposit my money,

Good Friends in Showland

saying the bank was shaky; but I disregarded their advice. Entering the bank, we dumped the bags before the receiving teller, who calmly opened the gate in front of his window and slid the bags upon the floor.

The amount each bag contained was written on a small card. The teller entered the amount in a book, which, together with a check book, he handed to me. I walked out, smiling at my friends, and advised them not to withdraw their accounts from this great bank. The run on that bank stopped that very day, and I remained its depositor for fifteen years. I never bought a mortgage or a bond without consulting its officials, and in all my transactions with it I never lost a penny. The Marshall & Isley Bank is known today as one of the largest in Milwaukee and its members are among my staunchest friends.

My office becoming too small for my increasing business, I looked around for larger quarters. The Schlitz Brewing Company owned considerable property at that time in Milwaukee and had just built a new theater and office building. The theater was named the Alhambra. I engaged the entire second floor for my publishing plant. Being located in a theatrical building, it brought me in contact with a great many professionals who played the Alhambra at the time. Every singer of note made

After the Ball

my office his headquarters. In this way I met the Four Cohans; and every night after the show, Jerry Cohan, Mrs. Cohan, Josephine, George and myself could be found at the Palm Garden, the fashionable restaurant of Milwaukee. We would sit around a table, eat our lunch, and chaff one another unmercifully.

George would always insist that his new coon song, entitled *Telegraph My Baby*, would last longer than any of my ballads. Of course, I disagreed with him and argued that ballads would outlast any comic or ducky song ever written.

George would grow hot under the collar, and his mother would say gently: "Now, George dear, don't argue so. I believe Mr. Harris is right; I also think a good heart-story song will outlast a comedy or coon song."

His charming sister, Josephine, would simply smile at both of us, while his father, Jerry, with a merry twinkle in his eyes, would say: "Mother, let them argue it out. They are both young and healthy, and 'twill do them good."

However, we remained the best of friends. I never met a more friendly group. As the saying goes in Dumas' *The Three Musketeers*, they were "All for one and one for all." I doubt whether such love ever existed between any four other stage people.

It was in Milwaukee that I first met George's for-

Good Friends in Showland

mer wife, Ethel Levy, who was playing at the time with a musical comedy headed by Yorke and Adams. Miss Levy was singing a song of mine entitled *My Sweet Eileen*. George heard her at one performance and it was a case of love at first sight. I joked him about it, but he said he was in earnest; that he was in love for the first time in his life and that he intended getting married. When a few years later George scored his first big musical success, *Little Johnny Jones*, Ethel Levy stood out prominently, and the little song that George had written for her, entitled *Goodby, Flo*, was one of the bright spots of that production. George certainly helped Ethel's success.

I recognized in George the potentialities as a song writer and became anxious to place him under contract to write for my organization. When I moved to New York and learned that George was rehearsing a new production, *Little Johnny Jones*, at Webster Hall, I went over to see him, accompanied by my office manager, Meyer Cohen. George seemed delighted to see me, although he was very busy rehearsing the chorus in songs and dances. With a cordial greeting he hastened over to me and inquired what brought me there. I replied that he was the direct cause of my presence at that place. I thereupon tendered him a blank check, which he was to fill in with any figure to suit himself, provided he would sign up with me for a term of years, so that

After the Ball

I might publish all his future songs. But much to my regret, he told me that I was too late. He had signed with Kerry Mills, a rival New York publisher. This proved my first keen disappointment in New York City. My anxiety to have him sign with me was quite justified, for I looked upon George M. Cohan as one of the most original and promising song writers of the country.

Returning to Milwaukee, I found performing in that city the famous May Yohe, who had married Lord Hope and after a few years divorced him and married Captain Strong, a son of Mayor Strong, of New York. Before long she again turned to vaudeville as a means of livelihood. On one occasion she called at my office and requested me to write a song for her. It was then that I wrote *When the Golden Leaves are Falling*, which she sang for many years.

I remember one night in particular, when I called for Miss Yohe after the performance at the theater and asked her to join me for a little lunch. The singer was always accompanied by her Japanese maid, little Mio San. After we had dined, she entered into the story of her marriage to Lord Hope; the reception accorded her by the English nobility; the famous Hope Diamond; her intense love for Captain Strong and her adventures with him in the Orient. It was early morning before she had finished, but to me it had seemed less than an hour.

Good Friends in Showland

May Yohe is now happily married to a nephew of General Smuts, of Boer War fame.

Two very good friends of mine were Mathews and Bulger, featured at that time in a new musical play, "By the Sad Sea Waves," with music written by the leader of their orchestra, Maurice Levi. It was in this musical comedy that I heard for the first time a new style of song which helped to revolutionize the song business. The song was called *Pas Ma La*, and was sung by a young soubrette, Jane Whitbeck. Received with great applause wherever sung, it was the forerunner of numerous coon songs of that day. Harry Bulger is still playing New York in musical comedies, while Sherry Mathews, owing to serious illness, retired from the stage about twenty years ago, and has since passed away. Both were talented men and made a wonderful team in showland.

Following the performance of *Pas Ma La*, a young negro performer entered my office in the Alhambra Theater Building with two song manuscripts entitled *You Ain't Landlord No More* and *When a Coon Sits in the Presidential Chair*, both of which he was using in his act. This was Irving Jones. After listening to the words and music, I immediately accepted the songs for publication. No doubt there are many people today who remember the wide popularity of these two melodies. Jones is still playing in vaudeville.

After the Ball

When attending the Alhambra Theater one evening I heard a charming young girl of about sixteen sing *The Song That Reached My Heart*, a beautiful ballad published by Lyon & Healy, of Chicago. This song sold into the millions. Here was a voice, as well as a song, that reached my heart. There was wonderful pathos in the girl's voice, which was as clear as a bell. I sent the singer an invitation to come to my office. She came, accompanied by her mother, who told me that she was very anxious to have her daughter enter comic opera instead of vaudeville. She felt that her daughter's talent was more adapted to that line. I agreed with her, but told her that Milwaukee was no place for her to enter the field of opera. Chicago and New York were the only producing centers of musical shows at that time. But I promised her that if I heard of an opening for a prima donna, I would communicate with her.

At that time Sherman Brown, manager of the Davidson Theater, the only theater in Milwaukee playing legitimate attractions exclusively booked from the Klaw & Erlanger offices, decided to produce opera in his theater during the summer months. He found a partner for this enterprise in young Sherwood Becker, Jr., son of a bank president. Young Becker had just then attained his majority and later became mayor of the city, the youngest man ever to attain that honor.

Good Friends in Showland

Brown and Becker went to New York, where they engaged a company; a comedian, a stage manager, and a prima donna, together with a complete chorus. After several rehearsals, they opened with "The Bohemian Girl" to a crowded house. I was one of that audience. Between the acts I strolled into the lobby for a smoke, where I ran into Brown and Becker. They asked my opinion of the show and the cast, and especially about the prima donna. I smiled and said that as long as they were engaging a prima donna, why not get one that was attractive. I volunteered the information that the public wanted not only to hear a good voice, but desired to see beauty as well. I agreed with them that they had an excellent comedian in Harry Brown, as well as a splendid chorus, and gorgeous costumes. A thought flashed through my mind, and I at once told them that I would introduce them to a prima donna possessing that rare combination, beauty and a voice. I thereupon rushed them over to the Alhambra Theater, where the little lady was before the footlights and about to launch into *The Song That Reached My Heart*. They listened and stood entranced.

When she had finished, they inquired whether it was possible to get her signature to a contract. I promised to use my best efforts toward procuring her services for them, with the result that the little girl went on the following week as the lead in

After the Ball

"Giroflé Girofla" and scored a tremendous success. The show ran through the entire summer season. That little girl was May DeSousa, who afterward appeared in New York with "The Chinese Honeymoon" and in London with George Edwardes' big musical productions.

There were other dear friends of mine who played season after season at the Bijou Theater in musical shows—Hallen and Hart, Mollie Fuller and Carrie DeMar. Hallen married Miss Fuller, and Hart married Miss DeMar. Their entertainments were always clean and free from suggestiveness, with lots of pep in their dancing and singing. Both teams were great favorites in Milwaukee. Hallen and Fuller always had their specialty, while Joe Hart invariably played the part of Foxy Grandpa, opposite Miss DeMar, and carried the comedy of the show. Miss Fuller sang a song I had written for her entitled *One Night in June*.

Following the season in which James Aldrich Libby first introduced my *After the Ball*, he was engaged by Hallen and Hart, on my suggestion, as their leading barytone. He introduced another new song that I wrote, entitled *I Love You in Spite of All*. Both Hallen and Hart have passed to the great beyond. Miss Fuller is still playing in vaudeville, while Carrie DeMar is carrying on the work of producing musical acts for vaudeville, which her

Good Friends in Showland

husband inaugurated on retiring from the stage.

Another actor who was eagerly watched for by Milwaukee audiences was Joe Welch, the Hebrew comedian in "The Peddler." He often invited me and my family for opening nights. In the second act of "The Peddler" was a scene in which the little adopted daughter, aged eleven, acting as house-keeper for the family, was seen rocking the baby to sleep. Joe entered slowly, carrying a bottle of milk and a loaf of bread. That particular scene ran as follows:

"Has the doctor been here, Esther?"

"No, father."

"Has the landlord been here, Esther?"

"No, father."

"Has the rabbi been here, Esther?"

"No, father."

And he added,

"Has Charlie Harris been here, Esther?"

The little player looked up at him, puzzled, and said: "I don't know what you mean, Mr. Welch; we didn't rehearse that."

The audience roared with laughter and killed the effect of that entire scene.

At the burlesque theater, which I visited once a week regularly for the opening performances, it was part of my business to get in touch with singers. During those times I met the best singers in the

After the Ball

country. It was there that I became acquainted with Louise Dresser, now in motion pictures in Los Angeles. She was then singing Paul Dresser's songs, and later sang several of mine.

Every burlesque troupe carried a quartet. One week there would be the Manhattan Comedy Four, the next the Gotham City Quartet, and the following week the Bison City Quartet. Al Shean, now of the famous team of Gallagher & Shean, was a member of the Manhattan Comedy Four. These quartets were always extremely popular. Ballads were their forte, as jazz had not then made its appearance.

Sam Scribner, now treasurer of the Actors' Fund of America and president of the Columbia Burlesque Wheel, owning theaters in large cities throughout the United States, was at that time managing a burlesque show. I am glad to say that we have enjoyed an unbroken friendship for many years. Usually after the shows we would sit together and talk shop. He always insisted on good clean performances.

"I tell you, C. K.," he would say, "although there are no women attending our performances today, you and I will live to see the day when they will patronize them as they do any first-class theater. Mothers will bring their daughters, and I am going to keep on cleaning up the shows until the job is done, even if it throws me into bankruptcy."

I am happy to say that Sam Scribner's ambition

Good Friends in Showland

was fully realized. Scribner was the first to make a prophecy concerning songs. Often he would say to me that it was tiresome to listen to the same songs in every burlesque performance. He believed that it was enough to hear a song once. I suggested that he have special music written for every show; that the performers should sing their ballads and published songs in the olio, but not use the same songs in the opening and closing parts, as all the other managers were wont to have them do. Scribner agreed with me, and the following season he engaged a well-known composer to write dance songs for the entire first part, while the olio was to contain the published ballads. It was not long after that others followed suit, and today composers are engaged exclusively to write new music for the entire Columbia circuit of theaters.

The Alhambra Theater had engaged a new treasurer, a Milwaukee boy, eighteen years old, of a pleasing personality. He made a great many friends while in the box office. He was ambitious and told me that he had leased Schlitz Park, a near-by public resort, for summer opera. The park contained a hall and stage, and a garden, with tables scattered about, where refreshments could be served. He had engaged the services of a musical stock company, with Louise Willis, a beautiful woman from Chicago, as prima donna. She possessed a charming soprano voice.

After the Ball

Everybody laughed at the idea of a boy of eighteen embarking upon this enterprise, but nevertheless it was not long before the venture proved successful. The orchestra was led by one Gustav Luders, a young German who had recently arrived in this country. Though possessing a thorough musical education, Luders had not been very successful and had drifted into Milwaukee, taking odd jobs. The boy manager of Schlitz Park was none other than Louis Werba, who years afterwards formed a partnership with Mark Luescher, present general publicity manager for the Keith circuit, which includes the Palace Theater and the Hippodrome of New York. Werba and Luescher produced the "Spring Maid" and several other successful musical shows. Last season Mr. Werba produced "Adrienne," which ran for six months on Broadway.

At Schlitz Park, after each performance, Werba, Miss Willis, Gustav Luders and myself would sit at a table in the garden and talk shop. Another person who often joined us there was a friend of Miss Willis—Mr. William Hepner, at that time a manufacturer of theatrical wigs in Chicago. He fairly idolized Miss Willis, and before the season had ended they were married.

Luders often pleaded with me to publish one of the operas he had written, and asked me to try to place it with some well-known producer. I told him that I was not publishing musical productions

Good Friends in Showland

at the time, but only my own compositions, and that I was kept busy exploiting them, but that some day in the near future I would see what could be done for him. Louis Werba would often kid Luders and say to me that I was overlooking a good thing, for he thought that Luders could make a fortune for me, and then he would wink at me slyly. But the joke was on me, for this same Luders a few years later had a musical show produced in Chicago called the "Prince of Pilsen" which ran for several years and netted a fortune for its author, composer, and publisher.

CHAPTER VI

For Old Time's Sake

Jack Haverly and his Theater—Banks Winters and Others—Caroline Hull—A Surprise Party—A Publisher's Troubles—The Scared Barber—Paul Dresser's Big Hit—A Musical Duel.

DURING the World's Fair in Chicago Jack Haverly, of minstrel fame, opened Haverly's Casino Theater in that city, where he used a stock minstrel company. It was there that I heard that Will Windom was singing a song published by Will Rossiter, entitled *Sweet Nellie Bawn*. A friend of mine, Tom Lewis, was also playing there, and he introduced me to Windom. I suggested to the latter that he sing *After the Ball* in place of *Sweet Nellie Bawn*. He knew that Libby had been singing it with great success in Hoyt's "A Trip to Chinatown" and that John Philip Sousa was playing it at the World's Fair. Windom agreed to sing it.

Lewis also introduced me to the entire company, which included Banks Winters, author of *White Wings*; Castell Bridges, a featured singer; Press Eldridge, monologist; Billy Rice, comedian and end

For Old Time's Sake

man; and Charles Shattuck, the interlocutor. All of them began to clamor for new songs, but I told them to wait until Windom had introduced *After the Ball*; if that song registered with the audience, I would furnish them all with new material.

The night Windom sang *After the Ball* Haverly, his wife, and daughter were present. It greatly impressed Mr. Haverly, who sent to the stage manager for the author's name. When he discovered my identity, he gave orders that hereafter I was to write all the songs for the first part of his minstrel show at that theater. And so it came about that I furnished Banks Winters with *Kiss and Let's Make Up*; Bridges with *Creep, Baby, Creep*; Press Eldridge with a parody on *After the Ball* called *After the Fair*; and Billy Rice with *Hello, Central, Hello!* This representation, together with Will Windom's singing of *After the Ball*, gave me much prestige with Haverly's various companies.

About this time there was a new descriptive singer in the East playing the New York vaudeville theaters. She had been creating quite a sensation and was known as the double-voiced vocalist. It was Caroline Hull. She had as yet never played the West, and so we had never met. I had written a new song, entitled *For Old Time's Sake*, which had come about in a strange fashion. As treasurer of the Milwaukee Lodge of Elks, I would often reach the lodge rooms about four in the afternoon. By

After the Ball

way of diversion, I would play a game of hearts, then much in vogue.

Seated back of me one afternoon, looking on, was a prominent lodge member who had just come in from a business trip. I noticed a photograph button on the lapel of his coat. It was that of a very beautiful girl. Turning to him, I inquired as to her identity. His face grew quite serious for a moment as he said that she was an old sweetheart of his whom he had intended to marry. She came from a small farm in Wisconsin. The two were neighbors and had become sweethearts as youngsters; but one day a traveling salesman came along, filled her ears with dreams of the city, and prevailed upon her to run away and be married in Chicago.

When my friend returned from a trip, he heard that the girl had fled. The news broke his spirit for a time. A year later he had occasion to go to Chicago, and there met her on the street. He was startled at her changed appearance. He greeted her kindly, as she looked so worn, weary and dejected. She returned his greeting by faintly crying his name, "Frank," and then almost collapsed in his arms. She allowed him to escort her to an ill-furnished room she had rented in a dilapidated building. There she told him the tragedy of her life: how the man had married her, but, soon tiring of her, deserted her in less than a year.

All his old love for her returned instantly, and he

For Old Time's Sake

took her in his arms, assuring her that, for old time's sake, he wanted to be always near her, and that if she consented, he would marry her as soon as she was free. She replied that she was too fond of him to mar his life, as a doctor had told her that she could live only a few months at the most. She said she had never known till then how much she loved him, and he kissed her, just for old time's sake.

Like a flash, came the idea for a song, and I followed the above incident literally as it is here described:

FOR OLD TIME'S SAKE

You ask me why upon my breast I wear her photograph;
You ask me why my hair has turned so gray.
I was a simple country lad, she was the village belle;
I worshipped her, my queen, both night and day;
A city stranger wooed and won my very first and only
love.

He won her, just her gentle heart to break.
He left her many years ago; I found it out by chance;
And I searched for her, for old time's sake.

CHORUS

For old time's sake, I told her that I loved her;
For old time's sake, I pressed her to my heart;
For old time's sake, I kissed her and caressed her,
And promised her we never more would part.

After the Ball

For old time's sake, she put her arms around me,
And said: "If but a dream, I would not wake;
I never knew till now how much I loved you."
Then I kissed her just for old time's sake.

The story now is at an end, there's nothing much to say;
Except I asked her if she'd be my wife.
Her tears were softly flowing as she looked at me and
said,
"I'd bring you nothing but a wasted life.
I was a vain and foolish girl when I refused your honest
love.
It's now too late; no wife for you I'd make.
Just hold me in your arms," she said, and then she passed
away;
And I buried her, for old time's sake.

On completing this song, I issued professional copies in the regular way. A copy chanced to fall into Miss Hull's hands while she was in New York, and she immediately added it to her repertoire, with considerable success. Not long after this I heard that she was to sing at the Olympic Theater in Chicago. I decided to go to hear her. My old friend Abe Jacobs, who had previously introduced me to Miss Bonehill, was still manager of the Olympic Theater. On my arrival there, Jacobs greeted me warmly and said: "Well, C. K., to whom shall I introduce you this time?"

I smiled and said: "Caroline Hull."

For Old Time's Sake

CHAS. K. HARRIS

Arranged by JOS. CLAUDE

INTRO
Andante espressivo



1 You ask me why up - on my breast I wear her pho - to - graph, You
2 The sto - ry now is at an end, There's noth - ing much to say, Ex -

Musical notation for the first system of the song. It includes a vocal line with two parts (1 and 2) and a piano accompaniment. The piano part has a dynamic marking 'p' (piano). The key signature has one flat.

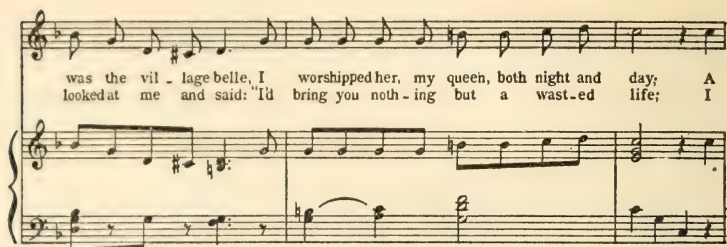
ask me why my hair has turned to gray, I was a sim - ple coun - try lad, She
cept I asked her if she's be my wife, Her tears were soft - ly flow - ing as She

Musical notation for the second system of the song. It continues the vocal and piano parts from the first system. The piano part has a dynamic marking 'p' (piano). The key signature has one flat.

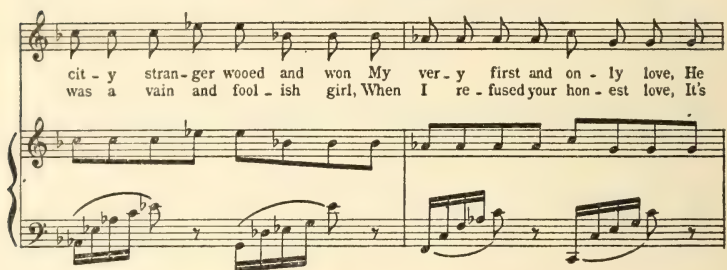
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For Old Time's Sake. - 4 - 2

The Neutrality March By MIKE BERNARD

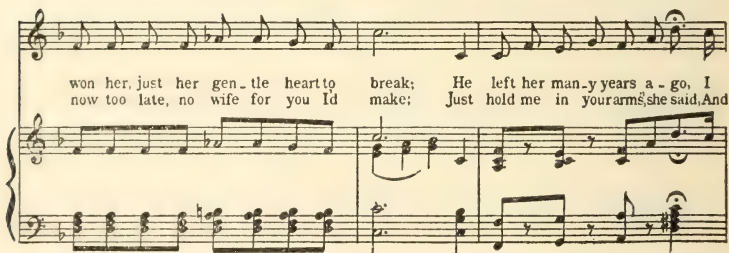
After the Ball



was the vil - lage belle, I worshipped her, my queen, both night and day; A
looked at me and said: 'I'd bring you noth - ing but a wast - ed life; I



cit - y stran - ger wooed and won My ver - y first and on - ly love, He
was a vain and fool - ish girl, When I re - fused your hon - est love, It's



won her, just her gen - tle heart to break; He left her man - y years a - go, I
now too late, no wife for you I'd make; Just hold me in your arms, she said, And

For Old Time's Sake, - 4 - 3

You Kissed Me - by Chas. K. Harris

Latest Hesitation Waltz - featured at all New York Dansants

For Old Time's Sake

found it out by chance, And I searched for her, For old time's sake. For
then she passed a way And I buried her, For old time's sake. For

The first system of the musical score for 'For Old Time's Sake'. It features a vocal melody in the upper staff and piano accompaniment in the lower staves. The key signature has one flat (B-flat), and the time signature is 4/4. The lyrics are written below the vocal line.

CHORUS

old time's sake I told her that I loved her, For old time's sake I pressed her to my

The chorus section of the musical score. It continues with the vocal melody and piano accompaniment. The lyrics are written below the vocal line.

heart; For old time's sake I kissed her and caressed her, And

The final line of the musical score. It concludes the piece with the vocal melody and piano accompaniment. The lyrics are written below the vocal line.

For Old Time's Sake. - 4 - 4

Waltz of the Rose - by Leo Edwards
Dreamy and beautiful

After the Ball

prom-ised her we nev-er-more would part; For old time's sake she put her arms a-

The first system of musical notation for 'After the Ball'. It consists of a vocal line in treble clef and a piano accompaniment in grand staff (treble and bass clefs). The key signature has one flat (B-flat). The vocal line begins with a half note G4, followed by a quarter note A4, and then a series of eighth and sixteenth notes. The piano accompaniment features a steady eighth-note bass line and chords in the right hand.

round me, And said, "If 'but a dream, I would not wake; I

The second system of musical notation. The vocal line continues with a half note G4, followed by a quarter note A4, and then a series of eighth and sixteenth notes. The piano accompaniment continues with the same eighth-note bass line and chords in the right hand.

nev-er knew till now how much I love you." Then I kissed her just For old time's sake.

The third system of musical notation. The vocal line concludes with a half note G4, followed by a quarter note A4, and then a series of eighth and sixteenth notes. The piano accompaniment concludes with the same eighth-note bass line and chords in the right hand.

For Old Time's Sake. 4-6

A Dream Of Heaven - Waltz - by A. M. Baner
The Worlds most popular Waltz

For Old Time's Sake

"Well, well," said he, "you certainly picked out a live one. She is making a great hit with your song. Come around this evening and hear it."

That night I met Jacobs in the lobby of the theater. He said he was sorry, but there was only one unsold seat and that was in the stage box. He probably knew my aversion to sitting in a box. I had often heard that professional people felt nervous in the presence of a composer whose song they were introducing. When I told this to Jacobs, he assured me that Miss Hull was the exception and that it did not matter to her whether I sat in a box or in the gallery.

Just as the performance was starting I was ushered into the box, and I discovered to my surprise that I was its only occupant. Max Hoffman, the husband of Gertrude Hoffman, the well-known dancer, was leading the orchestra at the time.

The first act was an acrobatic turn. This was followed by a team, Eddie Guiggere and his wife. After they had gone through a part of their act, Guiggere stepped down to the footlights and said: "Ladies and gentlemen, I will now sing for the first time a song especially written for me by Mr. Charles K. Harris, entitled *All For the Love of a Girl*."

Then came Smith and Fuller, Chicago's favorite instrumentalists, playing a dozen different instruments. Near the end of their act, Smith also stepped

After the Ball

to the footlights and said: "Miss Fuller and I will now conclude our evening's performance by playing on musical glasses a song written exclusively for us by Charles K. Harris, entitled *Will I Find My Mamma There?*"

At that moment, I must confess, I became rather uncomfortable and hoped that no one would recognize me.

The fourth act was that of Caroline Hull, the featured performer of the evening. Emerging from one of the wings, she immediately received an ovation. Miss Hull sang three well-known numbers by different composers. At the conclusion of these she, too, stepped to the footlights and said: "Ladies and gentlemen, I intend to introduce for the first time a song written especially for me by Mr. Charles K. Harris entitled *For Old Time's Sake.*"

By this time I felt that it was a case of Too Much Johnson. However, Miss Hull was obliged to take a half dozen encores and curtain calls.

Following this, I intended to make a hasty exit to the street, when I noticed that the next actor on the bill was a personal friend of mine, Jim Cullen, monologist. He was one of the big favorites in Chicago, where, changing his monologue at each performance, he played continually. Whatever Jim said was always greeted with laughter. He had a good singing voice and his parodies on the popular ballads of the day were excruciatingly funny. It

For Old Time's Sake

would have been an unpardonable sin for me to leave the box at that time, and so I stayed.

Cullen walked on the stage in his light and breezy manner, saying, "Well, folks, here I am as usual—some new stories, new parodies, and a few new jokes. By the way, this seems to be a Harris night, so I am also going to sing a parody for you on his famous song *Kiss and Let's Make Up*, entitled *Kiss and Let's Break Up*. Walking over to my box, he extended his hand, saying, "Hello, Charlie! Heard you were witnessing our performance. Glad to see you."

Then, turning to the audience, he cried out: "Ladies and gentlemen, it gives me great pleasure to introduce to you the celebrated author of *After the Ball* and the numerous other songs you have heard here this evening." Nodding to me, he said: "Mr. Harris, Mr. and Mrs. Audience," and to the audience: "Mr. and Mrs. Audience, Mr. Harris."

At that moment Max Hoffman, the leader, to make it all the more impressive, struck up a bar of *After the Ball*. After considerable applause, I arose and bowed. Shortly afterward I tiptoed quietly out of the box, having had enough excitement for one evening.

Abe Jacobs, with a broad grin on his face, was waiting for me in the lobby. Good-naturedly I demanded an explanation for this unusual reception. Abe said that he had arranged the whole affair in my honor, that before the curtain rose he had gone back-

After the Ball

stage and instructed the performers who were singing my songs to announce the fact to the audience. To Jim Cullen was left the task of winding up this surprise. Jacobs suggested that I go back and chat with Miss Hull, there being no need of an introduction, as she had heard of my presence that evening and expected a call from me.

It was raining when I walked around to the stage entrance to wait for Miss Hull. She was a very tall woman and towered considerably above me. When she emerged, carrying her make-up box and an umbrella, I introduced myself and she gazed down at me, saying, "So this is you! I thought so. You are just as I pictured you to be"—whatever that meant.

I was taken aback for a moment; but having had a great deal of experience with the profession, I ignored her remarks and decided to go through with it. I invited her to have a little lunch around the corner at the Union Restaurant, at the time the rendezvous of most of the professionals playing Chicago. She curtly replied that she never indulged in midnight lunches. I was beginning to feel rather uncomfortable, but finally asked her to have at least a bite where we could sit and discuss our business. With that a smile came to her lips, and she consented.

With Miss Hull holding her umbrella over my head, we walked toward the restaurant. We must have appeared to onlookers like the original one and a half. Walking into the crowded restaurant, we

For Old Time's Sake

had just managed to procure a table when a man from one of the tables came over and greeted me effusively. It was none other than Gustav Luders, whose "Prince of Pilsen" was then playing a Chicago theater to crowded houses. I thereupon introduced Miss Hull to him as one of the great singers of popular songs who was also introducing one of my songs. We were soon joined by Sam Bernard, Frank Belcher, and Willie Collier, all of whom were playing Chicago at the time. We had quite a jolly crowd at our table.

When we had finished eating, Miss Hull started in to apologize. She confessed that she was under the impression that, because I had written *After the Ball* and other well-known ballads, I was affected with the common malady known as a swelled head. "But," she added, "any man with so many devoted friends must have a lot of good points; so I will forgive you."

Miss Hull sang my song for many years thereafter, and we remained firm friends as long as she lived.

About that time I conceived the idea of placing photographs of prominent singers on the title pages of my songs. Little did I foresee the annoyance this would cause me. As my songs were sold throughout America and Great Britain, they were being displayed in all music-store windows and on all music counters. The singer whose photograph appeared upon the sheet of music was thus the recipient of

After the Ball

considerable free advertisement. Hundreds of letters came to my office daily, with photographs inclosed, requesting that I place these photographs on the cover of the next song I published. The first time a photograph appeared on the cover of sheet music was when Libby sang *After the Ball*. I made a five-year agreement with him that no other photograph than his should adorn the title page of that song.

That is where I put my foot in it, for I received a photograph of Miss Helene Mora from Mr. Hyde, of Hyde & Behman, proprietors of the largest vaudeville theater in Brooklyn. She had been playing exclusively in the East and was not yet known in the West. Mr. Hyde wrote that Miss Mora intended playing the West shortly and would soon appear in Milwaukee at the Exposition Building.

This building had been converted during the summer into a large music hall seating 3000 people. It was under the management of Oscar Miller, who managed also the Alhambra Theater. Hyde requested that I place Miss Mora's photograph on an edition of *After the Ball*, as she was singing the song with great success. I thought it best to wait until Miss Mora arrived, when I could explain the situation to her. So I delayed replying to Hyde's communication. In due time Miss Mora did arrive and opened at the Exposition Building with *After the Ball* and other descriptive songs.



1



2



3



4

- (1) Nora Bayes in her youth
- (2) Caroline Hull, the double-voiced vocalist
- (3) Lydia Barry in "There'll Come a Time"
- (4) De Forrests dancing to "After the Ball"

For Old Time's Sake

Most singers made it a practice to call on me during the morning, so I waited for Miss Mora the next morning at my office; but she failed to appear. However, the following Saturday at eleven A. M. she strolled in with quite a chip on her shoulder. Without wasting a moment's time, she demanded an explanation as to why her photograph did not appear on the published copies of *After the Ball*, which she said she was constantly singing. She was anxious to know why I had discriminated against her. When I tried to explain things, she would have none of my explanations.

As it was drawing near lunch time, I invited Miss Mora to take lunch with me. She consented. We went to the Palm Garden, across the street. I related to her the story of the difficulties I had experienced in getting a singer to use *After the Ball*; how for nearly a year it lay upon the shelf covered with dust, until Libby came along and agreed to use it. I said I had solemnly promised Libby that for five years no other picture than his should appear on the title page, and that this promise I had kept religiously. Miss Mora was sufficiently fair-minded to see my point, and her parting words were that she hoped I would always keep my promises to every singer.

She was singing with much success at the time a song called *Comrades*, written by Felix McGlennon, a well-known song writer of London. I told her

After the Ball

that I was working on a new song and that when it was completed I would send her the manuscript copy for her approval. I promised also to use that much-mooted photograph on any new song of mine she might sing. Miss Mora then gave me her route for the next three months, and we parted the best of friends.

At the Exposition Mr. Miller, the manager, had engaged some of the best artists in vaudeville. Among these were the Rogers Brothers, Maude Raymond, Julia Mackey, Levi, the celebrated cornetist, and the Manhattan Comedy Four.

An amusing incident occurred which almost proved a serious one for my songs. It taught me not to criticize anyone else's compositions. One day I walked into Flanner's music store and he showed me a song, words and music, by my friend Oscar Miller of the Exposition and the Alhambra Theater. Being his first attempt at song writing, it was his pet. The song was called *Can You Waltz?* I looked it over and asked Flanner what had induced him to publish such a poor song. Flanner's line of reasoning revolved about Miller's affiliations with two theaters, where it would be an easy matter to induce performers to utilize compositions by the house manager.

Friend Flanner obligingly reported our conversation to Miller who, as a result, gave orders to every singer appearing at Exposition Hall to omit all my

For Old Time's Sake

songs. As many professionals were using my songs, and as orchestrations had been made in the singers' respective keys, Miller's orders placed these professionals at a great disadvantage, since they were thus compelled to learn new songs. However, the following season the Exposition passed under different management, that of Charles P. Salsbury, who rescinded Miller's orders concerning my songs.

Popular songs must be written by composers who understand the technique of their art. However, like the gentleman that he was, Miller walked into my office six months later and apologized for his drastic order. He said that I had really done him a great favor by criticizing his song. He soon discovered that he possessed no talent as a song writer and could never make a success at song writing. In a short time he became one of Milwaukee's most successful managers.

Soon after this event I attended a performance of "Secret Service," given with William Gillette as star. There was a scene in the play where a young Southern boy, aged fifteen, was twitted by his little sweetheart because he did not join the army. He was willing enough to do so; but his father, an army man, and his brother John, an officer, insisted upon his remaining at home. However, the youngster finally ran away and joined the army as a drummer boy. He was wounded, and his corporal carried

After the Ball

him off the field. When they arrived at the boy's home, the latter exclaimed to the darky who met him at the door, "Break the news to mother."

On my cuff that night I wrote the title *Break the News to Mother*. Next day I wrote the first verse and the chorus. Then I went out to lunch and from there to the barber's for a shave. Try as I might, I could not think of a second verse or of a climax for the song. There is an old saying, "Any fool can get on the stage, but the thing is to get off right." How to end the song with a punch puzzled me.

While still in the barber's chair a thought came to my mind in a flash, and I cried out: "I have it! I'm going to kill him!"

The barber, who was shaving me at the time, became very much startled when he heard this remark and thought I had lost my reason.

"Joe, I tell you, he's got to die!" I shouted again.

By this time the barber was surely convinced that there was something wrong with me. I was in a hurry to leave, and in less than two minutes was out of the chair, much to the relief of the barber. I had the last verse and was happy:

BREAK THE NEWS TO MOTHER

While the shot and shell were screaming upon the battle-field,

The boys in blue were fighting, their noble flag to shield.

For Old Time's Sake

Came a cry from their brave captain: "Look, boys!
Our flag is down!

Who'll volunteer to save it from disgrace?"

"I will," a young voice shouted;

"I'll bring it back or die"; then sprang into the thickest
of the fray,

Saved the flag, but gave his young life, all for his coun-
try's sake.

They brought him back and softly heard him say:

CHORUS

"Just break the news to mother; she knows how dear I
love her;

And tell her not to wait for me, for I'm not coming home;
Just say there is no other can take the place of mother,
Then kiss her dear sweet lips for me and break the news
to her."

From afar a noted gen'ral had witnessed this brave deed.
"Who saved our flag? Speak up lads—'twas noble,
brave indeed."

"There he lies, sir," said the captain; "he's sinking very
fast";

Then slowly turned away to hide a tear. The general in
a moment

Knelt down beside the boy, then gave a cry that touched
all hearts that day.

"It's my son, my brave young hero. I thought you safe
at home."

"Forgive me, father, for I ran away."

After the Ball

When the song was finished I took the typewritten copy over to brother Harry's store. I always made it a practice to try my songs on "the dog," and in this instance Harry was it. When I had sung it for him I was rewarded with a loud guffaw. Harry's contention was that there had been no war since 1864, that the memories of that were fast fading away, and that undoubtedly another war was a long way off—so why a soldier song? His argument was so logical that it all but convinced me. Nevertheless, I liked the melody and story, and, remembering Miss Mora, mailed this copy to her in St. Louis, together with an orchestration in her key. Two weeks later she returned the song with a note saying that she had tried it out, but found that it lacked a punch. It seemed that *Break the News to Mother* was to go through the same experience as *After the Ball*; but I was not discouraged and was confident that some day the song would be heard.

Just about this time my old friend Paul Dresser was playing an engagement at the Bijou Theater in a comedy called "The Two Johns." The characters were two very fat men and fitted both principals perfectly. As usual, Dresser came to my office. He was at that time one of the coming song writers of the country and wrote both words and music. He had written *The Convict and the Bird*, *The*

For Old Time's Sake

Curse, and several other songs, but had not as yet gone into the publishing business.

Paul was one of the best loved characters on Broadway twenty-five years ago. No man in the country, I imagine, was closer to him than I was, for we were the only two composers who wrote both words and music to a song.

When Paul first came to see me in Milwaukee he was selling his manuscripts in New York while acting on the road. He would dispose of his songs to anyone who cared to publish them, being what you might call a free lance. I remember telling him one day: "Now, Paul, when you get back to New York, hunt up a couple of young fellows in some music store who know the business. Tell them you will send them your songs if they will publish them and furnish the capital under a partnership agreement. That is the way I got my start."

So when Paul returned to New York he ran across Pat Howley, now deceased, and Fred Haviland, both employed at the time by the Oliver Ditson company. He interested them in the proposition, out of which was born Howley, Haviland & Dresser, Music Publishers. The firm was a success from the start. Paul continued on the road with his sketch and wrote songs at the same time.

On his next trip to Milwaukee Dresser asked me to go with him to the Alhambra Theater, where Joe

After the Ball

Natus was to sing a new song of his for the first time. He wanted my opinion of it. We went, and after its rendition he turned to me and asked: "What do you think of it?" I told him I would stake everything I possessed that this number was a sure-fire hit. Tears came to his eyes. We went to a telegraph office, where he wired his associates:

"Harris says *On the Banks of the Wabash* looks like a great big hit. Get song out immediately."

Right here I am going to mention a peculiar coincidence. The next season following this little episode, when Paul returned to Milwaukee, I reminded him of my prediction regarding *On the Banks of the Wabash*. Paul had not forgotten it himself. He told me that he expected that season to be his last on the road, as his firm needed him in New York. They were going to move into a large building at Broadway and Thirty-second Street.

This time I invited Paul to the theater to get his opinion on a new ballad of mine to be sung by the same performer who had first rendered *On the Banks of the Wabash* a year before. There we sat, side by side, in the same theater and heard Joe Natus try out my latest number, *Break the News to Mother*. Paul turned to me and said, using the same expression I had employed in his case: "Charles, you have a big hit there—as big as the Wabash. That would be a great song for Julia Mackey, who is now

For Old Time's Sake

in England, but will soon be home. Hold it for her."

His prediction proved true. Each of our songs sold more than 1,000,000 copies.

Paul and I had a tacit understanding between us—a sort of gentlemen's agreement—that we would never compete on the same style of song. He followed my *Break the News to Mother* with a plaintive ballad, *Just Tell Her That You Saw Me*. Soon after that I came back with a child song, *Always in the Way*. Then he brought out a soldier song, *The Blue and the Gray*; I followed with a pastoral song, *'Mid the Green Fields of Virginia*. He followed with *My Gal Sal*. So, you see, we never conflicted. We always wrote in a different style and had practically the whole field of popular songs to ourselves for some years.

The firm of Howley, Haviland & Dresser is no more. It went into bankruptcy. The cause of the failure I am unable to give. However, I do know this: Paul was left without a dollar. He came to see me when I located in New York and seemed broken-hearted.

I remember saying to him: "Paul, I'll tell you what I'll do. I'm going to give you an office here with me. Put your name on the door, publish all your songs, exploit them, and we'll split fifty-fifty."

The poor fellow was all choked up with emotion

After the Ball

and could not answer. We shook hands on it. The next day my old friend died. I went to his funeral and the world seemed dark indeed, as I had lost my best pal. The priest recited many choruses of Paul Dresser's songs—songs that had traveled around the world. There was not a dry eye among his many friends assembled there. The funeral was conducted by the Brooklyn Lodge of Elks. I never knew his people. He had a brother, Theodore Dreiser, the famous novelist, who is still living. Paul must have written at least fifty songs, any one of which would have entitled him to recognition. Among his best were: *The Curse, The Convict and the Bird, On the Banks of the Wabash, The Blue and the Gray, and My Gal Sal*. He never wrote a poor one. When he sat down to write a song his heart and soul were in it. Money meant nothing to him. The love of beauty and sentiment meant everything. When he had an inspiration, he shared it with the world.

Another little incident in this connection has reference to our congressman, Mr. Sol Bloom. At that time he was in the music business in Chicago. Paul was one of Bloom's greatest admirers. I remember when Bloom gave a party at his fiancée's home some twenty-five years ago, to celebrate his engagement, Paul and I were invited. I came on from Milwaukee. Mr. Bloom rose to the occasion and said: "Ladies and gentlemen, I have the pleasure of in-

For Old Time's Sake

roducing to you two of the greatest song writers in my opinion in the world, Paul Dresser, author of *On the Banks of the Wabash*, and Charles K. Harris, author of *After the Ball*. We are going to call on them to prove which is the better composer."

Paul played one of his new compositions, amid great applause. Then it was my turn, and I sang a new one; and so on until we both were exhausted; and still they were clamoring for more. We had to call a truce.

To return to Dresser. I remember that Paul had a little memorandum book in which he kept a record of those who owed him money; and when I inquired why he did not collect now that he was in need, he told me that he had been turned down in every instance. There you have Paul Dresser's entire story in a nutshell. It was all in the little red book, which I really believe was the cause of his broken heart—the ingratitude of those he had befriended.

Though Paul has been dead many years, the state of Indiana is going to honor him by erecting a monument to his memory—on the banks of the Wabash.

CHAPTER VII

More Song-Hits

I Invade the East—Writing “Always In The Way” and “Just Behind The Times”—Meeting Bernard Dyllyn, Mike Bernard, and Imogene Comer—Ella Wheeler Wilcox Inspires My “Cast Aside”—Tearer The Great—I Buy a Box Seat and Create a Commotion—Am Made Chairman of Reception Committee for Prince Henry—All’s Well That Ends Well—Cutting “The Green Fields”—The Story of “Hello, Central.”

ABOUT this time I was thinking seriously of opening an office in New York City. I had already opened one in Chicago. The main difficulty lay in securing a manager who would be a singer, song plugger, as well as a business man. These three essentials in one man were hard to find. Meyer Cohen, the California barytone, had passed through Milwaukee several times. He was one of the Old Homestead Quartet, featured with Denman Thompson. He was not much in appearance, but had a splendid voice and an engaging personality. Cohen was then singing one of my songs, *Better Than*

More Song-Hits

Gold. I allowed him to take my entire catalogue of songs with him to sell on the road on a commission basis. His first season as salesman was very successful. I then permitted him to collect money from his customers, every penny of which he promptly turned over to me.

I had thus found the right man. I sent him on to New York with instructions to find an office on Twenty-eighth Street, where all music publishers were located at the time. I told him that I would forward him a stock of professional copies and orchestrations, so that he could teach the professional singers the songs, as well as take care of all Eastern sales. The office was a success from the start. Cohen was acquainted with every singer then in vaudeville and was very popular. For twenty-five years he was known as the greatest professional manager and song plugger in America.

I learned that Julia Mackey, the American singer, who had been in London for the previous two years doing pantomime, was planning to return to this country and open an engagement at Koster & Bial's, a famous music hall in New York City, where all the prominent vaudeville artists were appearing. I wrote Cohen to keep his eye open for Miss Mackey and let me know when she arrived. I knew she would need new songs. She had sung a great many of mine in the past.

She opened at Koster & Bial's with great success.

After the Ball

However, several of the papers criticized her songs, all of which were written by English composers. I then wired Cohen that I was sending him the manuscript copy of a new song entitled *Break the News to Mother*. He sent for Miss Mackey and sang it to her in hopes that she would introduce it at Koster & Bial's. She tried it over and liked it, telling Cohen to make an orchestration and promising to put it on the following night.

That night the battleship Maine was blown up in Havana Harbor. Cohen immediately inserted into the opening of the orchestration a few bars of The Star-Spangled Banner. When Julia Mackey made her entrance and the orchestra played the introduction the audience broke into an uproar. The last National Democratic Convention was a mild affair in comparison. When she went into the story the audience seemed deeply impressed. On the conclusion of the song, the house came down with applause and the song was a success from that moment. My rival publishers said: "Harris luck; it took a war to make his song popular."

A week later I received a telegram from my old friend Helene Mora, who had previously turned the song down, begging me to return to her at once the orchestration I had made in her key. The rest is history. It is always the unexpected that makes a song a hit.

I remember one occasion especially. It was dur-

More Song-Hits

ing Christmas week and a large tree had been placed in the window of a department store opposite my office. The tree was ablaze with lights and filled with toys for the youngsters. Many little tots crowded around the window, their noses flattened against the pane, and peered longingly at that tree.

A little boy and a girl especially caught my attention as the latter, pointing to a little doll, exclaimed, "I choose that."

The boy said: "I'll choose that," pointing to a train of cars running around on a track. The girl unconsciously stepped on the boy's foot, and he quickly pushed her aside, saying: "You're always in the way. Can't you see what you're doing?"

Those words kept ringing in my ears on my way home to dinner. A few days later I wrote and composed *Always in the Way*, the words of which follow:

ALWAYS IN THE WAY

Please, mister, take me in your car,
I want to see mamma.
They say she lives in heaven.
Is it very, very far?
My new mamma is very cross,
And scolds me ev'ry day.
I guess she does not love me,
For I'm always in the way.

After the Ball

CHORUS

Always in the way,
So they always say.
I wonder why they don't kiss me,
Just the same as sister May.
Always in the way,
I can never play;
My own mamma would never say
I'm always in the way.

The ride it ended all too soon,
She toddled off alone.
A light shone from a window
And she peeped into the room.
"Please tell me is this heaven, ma'am,
And will they let me stay?"
"Forever, child, for this is home,
And you're not in the way."

The problem then was to find a good singer who could render a song of this type well enough to insure its popularity and create a demand for it. Barry and Fay were then playing at the Bijou Theater, and the former's daughter, Lydia, then about eighteen, was making a hit in the company. When I heard her sing I thought, "Here's the girl for *Always in the Way*." I sent for Lydia and sang the song to her. She put it on before she left the city and kept it on for two consecutive seasons, making it one of the most popular child songs of the day.

More Song-Hits

There was a well-known minister in Milwaukee at that time who had presided over his congregation over long. The younger members of his congregation were anxious to have a younger man, one who should be more up to date and whose sermons would not put them to sleep. They held a meeting and decided to engage a new man. The affair created quite a furor at the time, and the papers all took it up and featured the news.

This struck me as being very pathetic. Here was a man who had given the best years of his life to the members of his congregation, soothed their sorrows, married them and buried their loved ones for ever so many years, and who was now to be cast aside like an old worn-out glove for a younger man. This incident inspired the song *Just Behind the Times*, the words of which are as follows:

JUST BEHIND THE TIMES

A party of young village people gathered
In their little church,
A meeting of importance there to hold.
They then decided that their minister,
Although they loved him well,
He must resign, for he was growing old.
They sent to him this message,
He read it through and through,

While burning tears fell on the cruel lines,
For it was written in that message

After the Ball

That his sermons were too dry.

It also read, "You're just behind the times."

CHORUS

Behind the times, so they told him;

He's just behind the times.

His voice has lost its sweetness,

Like bells that no more chime.

He cannot hold their attention,

He faltered o'er his lines;

His power has gone, though few will mourn,

For he's just behind the times.

On Sunday morn the church was crowded,

For 'twas rumored round the town

A younger minister was going to preach;

And in that same old dusty pulpit

Where the old man reigned for years

Another man had come his flock to teach.

He spoke of love and politics;

He spoke of fashion, too;

Of sights he'd seen in many different climes.

The old man sat alone and listened,

Then he sadly shook his head—

"I guess they're right, I am behind the times."

And so at last the sermon ended

And the old man slowly rose.

"Just let me say a few words ere you go."

Then slowly up the aisle he staggered

More Song-Hits

To his pulpit as of yore,
With trembling limbs and face as white as snow.
I've buried all your loved ones,
I've wept beside their graves,
I've shared your joys and sorrows many times."
Just then he gave a start, for his poor heart
Had broken from its pain.
His last words were: "I am behind the times."

Now for a singer to introduce and popularize this song. A friend told me of a new descriptive singer who had formerly been singing with the Corinne Opera Company, managed at the time by Mrs. Kimball. That singer was J. Bernard Dylln, who had left opera to enter vaudeville. He was then appearing at Hopkins' Theater, South Clark Street, Chicago.

In those days, I never let any grass grow under my feet, especially when it came to introducing a new song. I went down to Chicago and saw the manager, Charles Elliot, who happened to be a friend of mine. I informed him that I was anxious to meet Dylln. He told me that the latter was an awful crank, objected to his place on the bill and kicked because his name was not displayed in large enough type on the outside of the theater, finding fault with the orchestra and even objecting to the manager himself. But with all that, Elliott considered him quite an artist in his line.

After the Ball

Despite all his eccentricities, I still desired to see Dyllyn after his performance. Elliott and I listened to Dyllyn's act and got a line on his work. Dyllyn possessed a rich, powerful voice and an ingratiating personality. He was just the one to put over my new song, *Just Behind the Times*. The solution to the whole problem was to get Dyllyn to see things in the same light.

Elliott, true to promise, escorted me to Dyllyn's dressing room. Dyllyn was taking off his make-up and in a gruff voice told me to sit down. At that point Elliott left me to his tender mercies. Without indulging in any preliminary talk, I immediately told Dyllyn my object in coming to see him. He refused to look at any song, giving as a reason that his repertoire was complete and that the songs he was then using were very popular with his audiences. Personally I did not blame him; but my main object was to sell him my song, and I was not going to admit failure.

At that time South Clark Street was one of the toughest sections of Chicago. There was nearly half a mile of saloons and cheap dives lining each side of the street. From these dives the sound of tin-pan pianos could be heard all through the night. Sandbagging strangers for money was a common occurrence there in those days.

To return to Dyllyn. I changed the subject and invited him for a little lunch across the street at a

More Song-Hits

notorious resort, called *Lame Johnny's*, because it was the haunt of *Lame Johnny*, who had studied music at *Leipsic*, Germany, but who had sunk very low through drink. He played the piano in this saloon as a means of earning a livelihood.

In those days it was quite a fad among the profession to wear a lot of diamonds. So, thinking that it would be a good advertisement, I had purchased a diamond ring, a diamond stud, diamond cuff buttons, and a diamond-studded fob. I was only a kid at the time, but I had figured out even then that nothing succeeds like success and that diamonds surely bespoke prosperity. The actors put one another wise to be sure to look me up while in *Milwaukee* and see my display of diamonds. And those chunks of ice really brought a great many into my office, where I'd teach them a song. My diamonds never failed me.

Dyllyn gave one glance at my sparklers and warned me that I had better conceal them, or they might lead to a holdup. He advised me to leave them with *Elliott*, who would put them in his safe, saying: "Cull, this is *South Clark Street*, the toughest place in the world."

"I'm not afraid," I answered; "come on."

So we went to *Lame Johnny's*. When we arrived inside we found several of *Johnny's* pluggers sitting around a table. Their job was to throw coins to him upon the sawdust-covered floor whenever a customer

After the Ball

came in who looked like ready money, in the hope that the latter would also contribute. Dyllyn was about to toss a coin, when I held him back. The pluggers looked menacingly at me. Johnny, not hearing any coins falling, turned on his piano stool and caught sight of me. I still remember his ejaculation:

“Holy smoke, Harris, from Milwaukee! Here, you fellows, stop throwing those coins! He’s all right—never forgets us piano players.”

It was always my custom on departing from one of these resorts to remember the musicians substantially.

We left shortly afterward and wandered into another well-known cabaret called Wings. Someone recognized me there and as I entered passed the word, “Here comes *After the Ball*.” The man playing the piano turned and, on seeing me, hastened over. It was Mike Bernard, who many years afterward was the pianist at Tony Pastor’s Fourteenth Street Theater. Bernard, who subsequently toured in vaudeville for many years as a headliner, was the whole orchestra and conducted the entire performance single-handed. The moment Bernard saw me he told the proprietor he was going to get someone else to take his place for the evening, while he escorted Dyllyn and myself on a tour of all the near-by resorts. Mike had the reputation of being the great-

More Song-Hits

est song plugger at that time in Chicago, and I surely needed him in my business.

In all my Chicago travels during my song-plugging days in and out of saloons and cabarets, I was never molested, strange to say. Perhaps this good fortune was due to the fact that I was always friendly with the bosses of these joints and that they, no doubt, passed word to keep hands off Harris. It is singular, too, that many of our most popular songs first saw the light of day in these cheap joints.

After Dyllyn and I had made the rounds, we returned in the early morning hours to our hotels. From that night on we became very chummy. Dyllyn said he would be in Milwaukee the following week, when he would come up and learn my new song, *Just Behind the Times*. He kept his word. I taught him the song, which he sang continuously for two years as his leading ballad and which became the reigning success of the year. In later years up to his death a few years ago, Dyllyn played several engagements with George M. Cohan's various productions and with many other Broadway musical companies. Dyllyn was always a unique character.

Another singer who then enjoyed a reputation as a descriptive vocalist was Imogene Comer, a beautiful, willowy, dark-eyed girl, with a marvelous contralto voice. She could render a ballad better than any other singer I have ever heard. At the time she

After the Ball

was using a song entitled *The Tattoo on the Arm*, a song I well remember. Today it would be laughed off the stage, but Miss Comer put it over with a bang. She was also singing at that time Paul Dresser's song *The Curse*, which held the audience spellbound.

We became acquainted, and I found Miss Comer to be one of the most charming and delightful women I had ever met. I had no song for her at the time that I deemed worthy of her talents. She insisted that she must have a song that had never been sung before. I promised I would write one for her. Ella Wheeler Wilcox, the poet, was also a resident of Milwaukee. Her book, *Poems of Passion*, was creating a sensation at the time. One of these poems, *The End of Our Sinning*, made quite a hit with me. I asked Miss Wilcox's permission to use that line as the basis for a song, and she gladly gave her consent; and thus *Cast Aside* came into being. Miss Comer immediately accepted the song. It read:

She sat alone one moonlit night,
The maiden fair so young and bright.
Her tears upon a letter fell;
The same old tale, though sad to tell.
"Farewell, farewell," these words she read.
"This is the end of all," he said.
"Though sad my heart, I must decide,
For duty's sake cast you aside."

More Song-Hits

CHORUS

This is the end of our sinning,
Bright though as seemed the beginning.
You long for love that is surer,
Love that to you will be purer.
I hoped you'd always be near me,
That your heart ne'er would grow weary;
Yet you leave mine sad and dreary,
Now that I'm cast aside.

The hour has come, I know at last,
And you have thrown aside your mask,
And shown to me the awful sin
My love for you has plunged me in.
But still my love seemed pure and true,
If it was only shared with you;
And though you call another bride,
'Tis hard to feel I am cast aside.

His wedding day at length drew nigh,
He long'd to say one last good-by,
And wished once more to see her face,
Now bowed in shame at her disgrace.
He found her, but 'twas lifeless clay,
Her spirit soul had passed away.
A dagger lay close by her side,
The story told she was cast aside.

Miss Comer said she would sing it over the Castle circuit in Chicago, and mentioned the date of her

After the Ball

opening. She asked me to come on to hear it. In those days the admission prices in these theaters were ten, twenty, and thirty cents; box seats one dollar; matinées ten and twenty cents. I went to Chicago as she requested. The performances were continuous from twelve noon until eleven P. M. The acts that went on at noon and at suppertime were called chasers, they being so terrible that they would drive the audience out. Not wishing to walk about the streets, I took in the noon show. Walking up to the box office, I plunked down a dollar for a box seat. The ticket seller looked up somewhat surprised at this unusual request at that hour of the day. The usher, when I entered, looked at the ticket and also seemed surprised. My reason for buying that seat was to be near the door leading to the stage. I intended to make use of that door and see Miss Comer as soon as she had finished her act.

The show opened with a chaser, as usual. His name on the program was Tearer the Great. I wondered what the name meant, but soon learned when the act began. It consisted of an exposé of the tricks performed by the Great Herrmann, one of the cleverest magicians of his day. He completed his act by folding a sheet of paper into several parts, then tearing it with his fingers while singing *Kathleen Mavourneen*. At the end of the song he spread out the paper he had torn, and it was found to form a lace pattern for a table spread. This he threw to

More Song-Hits

a lady in the audience. This young chaser seemed to me to have possibilities if taken in hand and taught a few up-to-date stunts.

Happening to glance toward the entrance of the theater, I observed several people looking toward my box, apparently very much amused. I was puzzled to know what the joke was about, as there was nothing on the stage to create a laugh. It developed that the treasurer of the theater had told some of his friends that some farmer had wandered into the theater at twelve o'clock and bought a box seat for one dollar, for a ten and twenty cent noon-show. The tale spread behind the stage, and several of the performers peered through a hole in the curtain to catch a glimpse of the easy mark.

Miss Comer also became interested. When she saw me she burst into a hearty laugh and said: "That's C. K. Harris, the song writer, who is here to hear his song."

A few minutes later the manager of the theater came to my box and, returning the dollar I had paid, explained that he wished to extend the courtesy of the house to me. I remember spending the dollar with him in a café across the street.

Miss Comer sang the song for a long time and was instrumental in making it a big selling hit. For twenty years after that Miss Comer always kept one of my songs in her repertoire. I have just learned as I am writing these memoirs that the vaudeville

After the Ball

profession is about to give her a benefit. Miss Comer still has a good voice, but managers are looking for youth and fresh voices.

On my return to Milwaukee, Oscar Miller, manager of the Alhambra Theater Building, where my office was located, asked me if I had seen any new acts while in Chicago. It must be borne in mind that vaudeville managers in those days were compelled to pick up attractions wherever they could. There were very few booking agents then furnishing acts as there are today. Wishing to play a little joke on my friend Miller, I informed him of a great act in Castle's theater, and he became interested. I told him of Tearer the Great, saying he was badly placed on the bill. I suggested that he feature the Tearer on the program and play him up with the press. Miller wrote the name down.

I had forgotten the incident altogether, when, picking up a newspaper the following week, I found a criticism of the new bill at the Alhambra, mentioning Tearer the Great in his wonderful exposé of Herrmann and his marvelous paper-tearing act. The joke was on me, as the fellow had really made good on account of a good place on the bill.

The following morning there was a knock on my door, and in walked the Tearer in all his glory. He was arrayed in a long, black Prince Albert, a high silk hat, spats, bright yellow gloves, and was twirling a Charlie Chaplin cane. He proudly introduced

More Song-Hits

himself. He told me that he was looking for a song to fit his paper-tearing act in place of *Kathleen Mavourneen*, which was beginning to go stale. I had my pianist play over some songs for him. When he had finished, the Tearer came into my office carrying a copy of one of my songs. He said he would consider a proposition to sing the song in his act, provided I would make it worth his while. He stressed the point that the song would be a sure-fire hit if he used it.

"Did you make *Kathleen Mavourneen* a hit?" I asked pointedly.

Somewhat embarrassed, the Tearer replied that he was just using the song temporarily until he could replace it with a new one. I grew hot under the collar and told him to get out of my office. I learned afterward that the Tearer went to the office of Oscar Miller, in the same building, and complained that he had been insulted by a fellow named Harris, who thought he could write songs. Miller laughed and told him that it was this very Harris that had recommended him for the engagement at his theater.

To his credit be it said, when the Tearer learned of this, he immediately returned to my office, with his hat in his hand, and humbly apologized. I then told him always to do his best, as one can never tell who is sitting out in front. I also impressed on him the fact that he had the makings of a marvelous ma-

After the Ball

gician, but that he needed showmanship. I advised him to create new stunts and try to emulate the Great Herrmann. When he left, we parted good friends.

I had lost track of him, until I happened to stroll into the Colonial Theater, New York, several years later. On its bill appeared a magician who looked strangely familiar to me. To my surprise, I found him to be none other than my old friend the Tearer, now billed as the Great Lafayette, who was famous the world over. A few years ago he was burned to death, together with his performing lions, in London.

On returning from New York in the fall, I found Milwaukee in great excitement over the expected visit of Prince Henry, brother of Emperor William of Germany. I learned that the prince intended spending several days in our town. David Rose, then mayor of Milwaukee, appointed me chairman of his entertainment committee. We were given instructions by the German consul in Chicago as to the sort of entertainment that would befit the occasion.

As a large proportion of Milwaukee's citizens were German, we were expected to outdo all other cities. I was compelled to plan a three-day-entertainment campaign—no small job, as I certainly had had no previous experience in entertaining royalty. I arranged for the use of the Milwaukee Exposition Building and engaged all the biggest singing organizations in Milwaukee, combining

More Song-Hits

them into one big chorus and ordering them to rehearse all the well-known German and American songs. I also engaged twenty bands, to be stationed along the route of the march, as far out as the Soldiers' Home, situated five miles from the city; and here I encountered my first conflict with a musicians' union.

A number of young men in the city—about forty—had formed what was known as the Milwaukee Cadet Drum Corps. Their drums and costumes were furnished by Captain Pabst, of the Pabst Brewing Company. They had rehearsed long and faithfully. Their leader came to see me and asked me to give his band a place along the line of march, which I agreed to do.

The day before the Prince's arrival three officers of the musicians' union came to see me. They had read of the bands that were to take part in the parade and had noticed that the Milwaukee Cadet Drum Corps was assigned a place. The union's officers insisted that I withdraw these boys from the parade because they were not members of the union. I replied that it was only fair that they be given a chance to show what they could do, when they would probably be glad to join the union.

I said with a smile: "Perhaps after you have heard them play, you may not be so anxious to have them join."

But the delegation remained firm and threatened

After the Ball

to withdraw every band, saying that there would be no music the morning of the Prince's arrival. I told them I would think the matter over and let them know my decision at four that afternoon. I immediately 'phoned the mayor and told him of my predicament. He laughed and said that, as I was chairman of the entertainment committee, I would have to use my own judgment.

At four o'clock the committee returned to my office and its spokesman demanded my decision. I threw down the gauntlet to the committee by declaring that it was my wish to have the boys march in the parade; and that I would inform the press of the city of the real circumstances. I took pains to impress upon them that, as they themselves were of German origin, they certainly would be insulting the Prince. They walked out of my office in a huff. I lay awake all that night, contemplating the outcome of this reception to the royal visitor, minus music.

Early next morning I drove down to Union Station, where the Prince was to arrive at noon. The streets were jammed with people, eagerly waiting for the great event. Not a musical note was heard. On entering Union Station, I met Robert M. La Follette, at that time governor of Wisconsin, who was there also to welcome the Prince to our city. I told him of my difficulties with the union musicians. With a twinkle in his eyes, he told me that, as long as I felt I was in the right, to stick it out.

More Song-Hits

He said: "I doubt whether the Prince will miss the music, owing to the cheering crowds."

Nevertheless, my heart was heavy.

At last the Prince's train pulled in, with his entourage, Captain Pabst and Mayor Rose, who had gone to Chicago to escort him to our city. Among them was also Rear Admiral Bob Evans, one of the most popular officers in our Navy, who had been chosen by our President to make the tour with the Prince. Governor La Follette and I were introduced to the Prince and his staff. I escorted them to their respective carriages, and, in my little side-bar buggy, started to lead the procession all the way to the Soldiers' Home.

Suddenly my ears were greeted with the welcome sound of music, and, to my great relief, every band was in its position. The Milwaukee Cadet Drum Corps was there in all its glory and was applauded all along the line of march.

The Prince was welcomed at the Exposition by ex-Mayor Koch, who spoke in German, and by Mayor Rose in English. It was a magnificent sight when the combined musical societies arose and sang *Das Deutsche Lied*, with the audience all joining in. This was followed by *The Star-Spangled Banner*, accompanied by the waving of small German and American flags.

There was not a hitch in the three-days' program, and I felt quite proud of that entertainment. The

After the Ball

Prince told me that his visit to Milwaukee was one of the most enjoyable of his entire trip, and congratulated me upon my arrangements.

After the Prince had departed and everything had quieted down, I learned that he had given small tokens of his regard, such as stick pins, cigarette cases with his monogram, and beautiful gold cuff buttons, to the other members of the entertainment committee. It seemed I had been entirely overlooked, as usually happens to the man who does all the dirty work. I was chaffed by the Mayor and the entire committee, but I bore it good-naturedly. Six months later, however, the laugh was on those members who had received the Prince's gifts, for I received an invitation from Prince Henry, by way of the British Consul in Chicago, to be present at the coronation of his uncle, King Edward VII of England. Mine was one of the few invitations sent to America on that occasion. Illness in my family prevented my acceptance.

Meanwhile my publishing business was growing by leaps and bounds, and I was anxious to branch out on a larger scale and embark upon publishing compositions other than my own. I opened an office in the Ogden Building, corner of Clark and Lake Streets, Chicago, and engaged a young man as manager who had formerly been employed by M. Witmark & Sons, music publishers in Chicago.

More Song-Hits

The man's name was Abe Shiffman. Abe was an ambitious young chap, and I paid him a salary besides a commission on all sales he made. He certainly hustled like a Trojan to make the office a success.

One of my biggest customers there at the time was the Western Book and Stationery Company. This firm owned also the music department in the large department store, The Fair. Two weeks before Christmas I ran down to see my manager, as the music business during these holidays is always quiet, owing to the fact that people are then more interested in buying toys and Christmas gifts. I was trying to devise some method of keeping music before the public during the Yuletide season.

Shiffman introduced me to the manager of the Western Book and Stationery Company—a certain Mr. Brewer. He greeted me cordially and said that business in sheet music always fell off at that time of the year. I told him that my reason for coming to Chicago was to devise some plan for increasing the sales of music. He suggested that I write a song, offering to insert it in a full-page advertisement in the *Chicago Daily News*. He said he would also advertise the song during the holiday season, to be sold at fifteen cents a copy, its regular price then being fifty cents. Furthermore, he guaranteed to purchase 10,000 copies, as an initial order, at ten cents a copy.

After the Ball

My manager, Shiffman, looked at me with sparkling eyes, as under our agreement, this would have meant a handsome commission to him. But I had no idea for a song at that time and thought it impossible to create one on the spur of the moment. Besides, if I did, it might be a waste of effort, so far as the public was concerned.

But Mr. Brewer was insistent, and was willing to risk both the order and the page advertisement under those circumstances. While talking to him in his office, my eyes fell upon a small oil painting hanging on the wall. It represented a pastoral scene—a number of cows grazing in the fields.

Suddenly I exclaimed, "I have an idea, also a title for the new song—'*Mid the Green Fields of Virginia.*'"

I told them it was about a young man residing in Virginia, who decided to journey North, which promised better opportunities for him, leaving his mother and his sweetheart to wait for his return. After several years up North, the youth became a successful business man, but had forgotten his home, mother, and his sweetheart. One day a little girl entered his office to sell him some flowers. Their sweet perfume reminded this prosperous business man of his old home in Virginia and the loved ones he had left behind, and he decided to return.

My imagination was certainly working overtime. When I had finished, the manager of the Western

More Song-Hits

Book and Stationery Company said that he believed this idea embodied in a song would certainly catch the public's fancy.

With Shiffman tagging behind, I rushed from his office, caught the three o'clock train, and arrived in Milwaukee some two hours later. I immediately went to my office and worked until nine o'clock that night, when I finished the song. The next day I sent for my arranger and requested him to take down the melody, make a complete piano copy, and have it ready by six o'clock that evening. It usually took him three days to do a job like this. In those days I was paying five dollars for a complete piano copy. Today this costs from twenty-five to a hundred dollars. By adding an extra ten dollars to his fee, my arranger was induced to make an extra effort to complete the manuscript that night. I then bought a copy of that pastoral scene in a small picture shop and used it for the title-page of *'Mid the Green Fields of Virginia*:

'Mid the green fields of Virginia,
In the vale of Shenandoah,
There's an ivy-covered homestead that I love;
With its quaint old-fashioned chimney
And its simple homelike air,
'Twas the home of my dear parents now above.
Though I'm living in a mansion grand,
With wealth at my command,
I'd give it all just for a single day,

After the Ball

To play with my young comrades
And see my mother dear,
'Mid the green fields of Virginia far away.

CHORUS

There's a peaceful cottage there,
A happy home so dear;
My heart is longing for it day by day;
Where I spend life's golden hours
In the vale of Shenandoah,
'Mid the green fields of Virginia far away.

'Mid the green fields of Virginia
Stands an old mill by the stream,
And I'd come to that old spot to sing and play.
Ah, how often would I throw the stones
Into that babbling brook,
And I dreamed some day 'twould carry me away.
Yes, the dream came true. One day in June
I left the dear old home.
They told me mother's heart had broke that day.
Oh, if I could but see her,
I'd lay me down and die,
'Mid the green fields of Virginia far away.

A week before Christmas *'Mid the Green Fields* was completed and delivered to the Western Book and Stationery Company. I told my Chicago manager that I doubted whether that concern would be able to dispose of 10,000 copies. I really feared the

More Song-Hits

result. Not only did they sell all the copies, but ordered an additional 100,000, which sold just as readily.

I shall never forget an amusing incident in connection with this song. It was sung by so many professional singers that it proved tiresome to the audiences. It was during a rehearsal in the Olympic Theater in Chicago that a young lady singer handed a copy of it to Max Hoffman, the leader of the orchestra. He glanced at the title and then told her that the grass was growing so long in Virginia that he was compelled to cut it. I hardly blamed Hoffman for eliminating that song at the time.

While all this prosperity was following me I did not forget the little Southern girl whom I had met at the ball in Chicago. We had kept up our correspondence and were soon married at her home in Chicago. I purchased a home in Milwaukee, and we settled down to a quiet domestic life—as quiet as the music-publishing business permitted.

I remember one morning at breakfast my wife called my attention to an interesting item in a newspaper. It was the story of a coal dealer in Chicago who had lost his wife, leaving a little daughter, aged seven, to comfort him. As he was reading his evening paper, his little girl, who had been playing with some wooden blocks close by, suddenly threw them aside and climbed on a chair so as to reach a telephone hanging on the wall. Cranking the small

After the Ball

2 "Mid The Green Fields Of Virginia"

Arr. by JOS. CLAUDEUR

Words and Music by CHAS. K. HARRIS

INTRO
Andante Moderato

'Mid the green fields of Vir-gin-ia, In the vale of Shen-an-doah, There's an
'Mid the green fields of Vir-gin-ia, Stands an old mill by the stream, And I'd

i - vy covered homestead that I love; With its quaint, old-fashioned chimney, and its
come to that old spot to sing and play; Ah, how oft - en would I throw the stones in

The musical score is arranged in three systems. The first system is an instrumental introduction for piano, marked 'Andante Moderato'. It consists of two staves (treble and bass clef) with a key signature of one sharp (F#) and a common time signature (C). The second and third systems are vocal parts with piano accompaniment. Each system has a vocal line on a single staff and a piano accompaniment on two staves (treble and bass clef). The key signature remains one sharp (F#) and the time signature is common time (C). The lyrics are written below the vocal line.

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Mid The Green, Etc. 3 - 2

More Song-Hits

sim - ple home - like air; Twas the home of my dear par - ents now a -
to that bab - bling brook, And I dreamed some day twould car - ry me a -

bove. Though I'm liv - ing in a man - sion grand, With wealth at my com - mand, I'd
way. Yes, the dream came true, one day in June, I left the dear old home, They

give it all just for a sin - gle day; To play with my young com - rades, and
told me mother's heart had broke that day, Oh, if I could but see her I'd

Mid The Green, Etc. 3-3

After the Ball

see my moth-er dear 'Mid the green fields of Vir-gin-ia far a way.
 ley me down and die, 'Mid the green fields of Vir-gin-ia far a way.

The first system of music features a vocal melody in treble clef and piano accompaniment in bass clef. The key signature has one sharp (F#), and the time signature is 3/4. The melody is simple and sentimental, with the piano part providing harmonic support through chords and single notes.

CHORUS

There's a peace-ful cot - togeth-er, A hap-py home so dear, My

The chorus begins with a new melodic line in the vocal part. The piano accompaniment continues with a steady rhythm, using chords to support the vocal melody. The lyrics are printed below the vocal line.

heart is long-ing for it day by day, Where I spend life's gold-en hours in the

This system continues the chorus. The vocal melody has a slight rise in pitch, and the piano accompaniment features some more active eighth-note patterns. The lyrics are printed below the vocal line.

vale of Shen-an-doah 'Mid the green fields of Vir-gin-ia far a - way. *D.C.*

The final system concludes the piece. The melody returns to a similar pattern as the first verse. The piano accompaniment provides a final harmonic resolution. The lyrics are printed below the vocal line, and the piece ends with a double bar line and the marking *D.C.*

Mid The Green, Etc. 3-4

More Song-Hits

handle of the old-fashioned telephone then in use, she said: "Hello, Central, give me heaven, for my mamma's there."

Her father looked up from his paper in surprise. Her little face was all aglow with excitement as she answered: "Oh, yes, mumsy, I'll be very good to papa, and I'll never cry any more. Good-by, mamma." Then she blew a kiss into the telephone.

The explanation of this scene was that when the child's message reached the operator in the telephone exchange, the latter was rendered speechless. She told the other girls to listen in, which they did.

"Gee! I don't know how to answer the kid," said the operator.

One of the girls said: "Just say you're her mother and console her. It will soothe her little heart."

The father then took the little girl upon his knee and kissed her; and, with a smile on her face, the child fell asleep in his arms.

That story gave me the idea for one of the most popular child songs—

HELLO, CENTRAL, GIVE ME HEAVEN

"Papa, I'm so sad and lonely,"
Sobbed a tearful little child,
"Since dear mamma's gone to heaven,
Papa darling, you've not smiled.
I will speak to her and tell her
That we want her to come home.

After the Ball

Just you listen and I'll call her
Through the telephone."

CHORUS

"Hello, Central, give me heaven,
For my mamma's there.
You can find her with the angels
On the golden stair:
She'll be glad it's me who's speaking.
Call her, won't you, please?
For I want to surely tell her
We're so lonely here."

When the girl received this message,
Coming o'er the telephone,
How her heart thrilled at that moment,
And the wires seemed to moan.
"I will answer just to please her;
'Yes, dear heart, I'll soon come home.' "
"Kiss me, mamma, kiss your darling
Through the telephone."

More Song-Hits

"Hello Central, Give Me Heaven"

Words and Music by CHAS. K. HARRIS.

Arr. by JOS. CLAUDE.

Andantino.

The musical score is written for voice and piano. It begins with a piano introduction in G major, marked 'Andantino'. The introduction consists of two staves of piano accompaniment. The vocal melody enters on the third staff, with the lyrics 'Pa - pa I'm so sad and lone - ly, When the girl re - ceived this mes - sage;'. The piano accompaniment continues with a steady eighth-note pattern. The vocal melody continues with the lyrics 'Sobbed a tear - ful lit - tle child. Com - ing o'er the tel - e - phone,'. The piano accompaniment features a series of chords and eighth notes, with some measures marked with a 'V' (crescendo) and a 'p' (piano).

Pa - pa I'm so sad and lone - ly,
When the girl re - ceived this mes - sage;

p

Sobbed a tear - ful lit - tle child.
Com - ing o'er the tel - e - phone,

V

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After the Ball

Since dear ma ma's gone to heav - en, Pa - pa dar - ling you've not
How her heart thrilled in that mo - ment, And the wires seemed to

The first system of musical notation for the song 'After the Ball'. It features a vocal melody in treble clef and piano accompaniment in grand staff (treble and bass clefs). The key signature has one sharp (F#), and the time signature is 4/4. The lyrics are written below the vocal line.

smiled; — I will speak to her and tell her,
moan; — I will an - swer just to please her,

The second system of musical notation. It continues the vocal melody and piano accompaniment. The lyrics are written below the vocal line.

That we want her to come home Just you list - en and I'll
Yes, dear heart, I'll soon come home Kiss me, ma - ma, kiss your

The third system of musical notation. It continues the vocal melody and piano accompaniment. The lyrics are written below the vocal line.

call her Through the tel - e - phone:
dar - ling, Through the tel - e - phone:

The fourth system of musical notation. It continues the vocal melody and piano accompaniment. The lyrics are written below the vocal line.

Mello Central, etc.

More Song-Hits

5

CHORUS.

Hel-lo Cen-tral, give me heav-en, For my ma-ma's there;

You can find her with the an-gels on the gold-en stair;

She'll be glad it's me who's speak-ing, call her, won't you please;

For I want to sure-ly tell her, We're so lone-ly here.

D.C.

The musical score is for a chorus in G major, 2/4 time. It consists of four systems of vocal melody and piano accompaniment. The lyrics are: 'Hel-lo Cen-tral, give me heav-en, For my ma-ma's there; You can find her with the an-gels on the gold-en stair; She'll be glad it's me who's speak-ing, call her, won't you please; For I want to sure-ly tell her, We're so lone-ly here.' The piano part features a simple harmonic accompaniment with some arpeggiated chords in the right hand and block chords in the left hand. The final measure of the piano part is marked 'D.C.' (Da Capo).

Hello Central, etc.

CHAPTER VIII

The Rise of the Illustrated Song

*How I Got the Idea—My First Song Flops—I Take
an Enforced Vacation—Three Song-Hits All
in a Row—Tempting Advertising Offers—
How I came to Write "Better Than Gold"—
Trials and Tribulations—A Fair Exchange.*

WALKING into a dime museum one night in Milwaukee, I heard a young man sing a ballad. The manager told me that this singer hailed from Denver and that his name was Joseph E. Howard. I met him after the show and, of course, tried to have him sing one of my new songs. I had just written *Is Life Worth Living?*—a ballad consisting of three verses and three choruses, as was usual with popular songs in those days.

I told Howard I was going to think up a new way of exploiting this song. Instead of having him come out and sing it in the ordinary way, it was my intention to illustrate it in some manner while he was singing it. I sent for the scenic artist who had painted the crude flamboyant scenery for the dime museum and told him that I wanted three canvases

The Rise of the Illustrated Song

painted to describe the choruses of the song *Is Life Worth Living?* For example, an old lady walking across the street was struck by an express wagon; as she lay dying she whispered, "Is life worth living?" In the last verse there was a wounded soldier upon a battlefield, and before he expired he also murmured, "Is life worth living?"

The scenic artist agreed to paint the curtains for the princely sum of twenty-five dollars, provided I furnished the paint. A week later he delivered the curtains. They were crude, but he had done his best under the circumstances. The paintings were placed on rollers and connected with a rope. The plan was to have Howard sing the first verse; then, as he followed into the chorus, a stage hand was to lower one of the curtains, Howard pointing dramatically toward the canvas. Howard rehearsed the song faithfully and sang it as planned in the dime museum. To my complete surprise, the audience applauded this innovation enthusiastically.

I wrote Billy Rice, then manager of Haverly's Casino Theater, Chicago, that Joseph Howard was making a hit with illustrated song paintings. On the strength of my letter, Howard was engaged, and I anxiously awaited the verdict of the Chicago audience. I received a wire from Rice following Howard's opening, informing me that the illustrated songs were a big success.

I attended a lecture—a travelogue illustrated with

After the Ball

stereopticon views—given by a minister in his church. After the lecture I walked up to the minister and asked him where he had procured the slides and what they cost, as a new idea had occurred to me—to have actors pose for the pictures to illustrate my songs. The minister told me that he had taken the photographs himself, mounted them on glass, and then had them hand-colored by the Chicago Transparency Company, which made a specialty of that kind of work. The next day I journeyed to Chicago and called on this firm and outlined to them a theme for a new song, *I Love Her Just the Same*. I explained that I wanted slides made for the song after I had selected actors to pose in the various scenes. They said that if I would send them the photographs, they would make the colored slides for me.

When I returned home I found a photograph gallery which the proprietor allowed me to use. I also procured the services of the Silvers, a well-known singing team playing in vaudeville. In order to get the Silvers to sing with these slides I promised I would furnish them with a stereopticon machine, which Mrs. Silvers could manipulate while her husband was doing the singing. This was agreeable to them. A week later, at the Alhambra Theater, the Silvers appeared with the illustrated song slides in their act. Needless to say, it proved a big novelty.

As I watched the first performance another

The Rise of the Illustrated Song

thought came to me. There were many technical errors in that first set of slides that the public had overlooked but which did not escape me. As the pictures were taken in the photographer's studio, the backgrounds were all painted. For example, a street scene, a church and a forest, as well as the interior of a home, were shown. In the street scene, in which the Silvers posed they towered above the buildings, like giants in a Lilliputian village. In those days double exposure and other photographic tricks were unknown.

In my next set of illustrated slides I mapped out the exterior scenes and situations exactly as they are shown in moving pictures today. I eliminated the studio. I wrote the continuity and used a real church, a lane, and a beautiful park. I decided to engage a regular cast of actors to pose for this song, which was called *One Night in June*.

At that time the Thanhauser Stock Company was playing in Milwaukee; and Mr. Edwin Thanhauser, its manager, being a friend of mine, gave me permission to use the entire company. I explained to him that it would be a splendid advertisement for his company, as these slides would be shown in all the vaudeville theaters throughout the country, with the name of the Thanhauser Stock Company appearing upon each slide. He at once perceived the advertising value of this novelty and placed the entire cast

After the Ball

at my disposal. This same Thanhauser, by the way, became a motion-picture producer a few years later, and retired with a fortune.

I distributed a number of sets of these slides to singers of illustrated songs throughout the country; also a chorus slide, so that the audiences could join in and sing the song. Having located the desired scenes for the pictures, I hired four funeral hacks to call for the actors at the theater. We were driven to the locations selected, where I posed the actors in the scene fitting the lines in the song, and had photographs taken. Let me say here that this was more than merely a new method of staging songs; it was the first artistic illustrated song-slide thrown upon a canvas.

Naturally, the popular-song publishers, who were then springing up in New York like mushrooms, grasped the idea immediately, and soon were having their ballads illustrated, too. They made one mistake, however. Instead of supervising the making of these songs themselves, they turned it over to the slide makers. When the slides were shown, there was always something lacking, and the public ridiculed many of them.

Martin Beck, president of the Orpheum Circuit, a very dear friend of mine, always had a preference for my song-slides, because, as I gave them my personal attention, they were far superior to all others. Beck went so far as to exclude all slides in his theater

The Rise of the Illustrated Song

circuit but mine. I remember how many of the publishers of old classics scoffed at the idea, telling me that it was only a fad and would soon pass away. They would never entertain the idea of having one of their ballads illustrated, for fear it would detract from the song.

However, I found it was the quickest and easiest way to popularize a ballad before the phonograph, player piano, and radio came into existence. This so-called fad lasted for a score of years—until the advent of the moving pictures, which soon superseded the illustrated song slides. From this it can readily be seen that the illustrated song was the fore-runner of the motion picture.

My songs always told a story—based on incidents taken from life—and always contained a moral. The slides would follow one another in sequence. The chorus was, of course, reserved for the last, and the psychological result was that if the audience liked the melody, they would really become interested in the scenes; and the chorus would find them all singing, which made the song very popular. Often within a week after the distribution of the sets of slides to the profession, a song would become a success. Today, with the slides discarded as old-fashioned, it takes more time and money to register a hit.

Both my New York and Chicago offices were now in a flourishing condition, depending mostly upon

After the Ball

my own compositions. After writing and publishing *Hello, Central, Give Me Heaven*, there came a lull, for the reason that I had forgotten, in the excitement of making money, that all work and no play makes Jack a dull boy. I was feeling very much out of sorts, but did not consult a physician, hoping that I would feel better any day.

The business managers of my two offices were clamoring for me to write a new song to keep their commissions from stopping. So I wrote *What Is a Home Without Love?* I had illustrated slides made, professional copies printed, and advertised it as usual in all the dramatic papers; but, try as hard as we could, the dealers and the profession would have none of it, and proclaimed it a flop song. Again I received word from my managers imploring me to write a hit. I then wrote *Which Shall It Be?*—a child number, which also proved a frost.

My managers were up in arms, fearing that other publishers, with their new songs, would soon cast us into the shade. I then wrote *I Used to Know Her Years Ago*. Joe Howard was singing illustrated songs in New York City at the time, and my New York manager, Mr. Cohen, asked him to take photographs of several of the most prominent places in New York to fit the slides of this song, which he did. When the slides were shown they really were very beautiful, but all to no avail. There was something

The Rise of the Illustrated Song

lacking—that little spark, as we say, without which a song will never get across.

After that I consulted my family physician, who, after a thorough examination, advised me to lay off business at once and take a trip. He did not care where I went, but urged me to stay away at least two months; to eat, drink, smoke, and be merry, but under no circumstances talk shop or write any songs. I traveled as far east as Washington and as far south as Louisville, and had one great time. In fact, it was my first real vacation. Two months later I returned to my home in Milwaukee and found everything in good working order. I felt like a young race horse anxious to start.

While on my trip, in spite of the doctor's orders, I had jotted down several interesting incidents which had happened on the trip—and which I felt I could utilize in new songs. Consulting my little memorandum book on my return, the first item to strike my fancy was that of a play I had witnessed in Cleveland called "Young Mrs. Winthrop." The story was of a young society matron who attended a fashionable ball, leaving her little sick child at home, which died while the mother was dancing. I entitled the song *While the Dance Goes On* and published it. Within a few months it proved a wonderful hit.

Again consulting my little book, I came across

After the Ball

another item. While traveling on the train to New York a little girl and her father occupied a seat ahead of me. The man wore a black band around his sleeve. The little girl climbed up on his knee and, placing her arm about his neck, said: "Why are you sad, papa darling?" That gave me the idea for *There'll Come A Time*, which was launched in the usual way and also proved a big success.

Once more consulting my little book, I saw the item I had jotted down while in Indianapolis, my last stop before returning home. I had received a letter from my family anxious to know just when they were to expect me home. Realizing how I was longing to see their dear faces again, I wrote a song entitled *I'm Wearing My Heart Away For You*. I published it, and it proved another big success.

It was then that I received telegrams from both my managers to stop writing hits and give them a breathing spell, as it was almost a physical impossibility for them to do justice to the two other numbers, which were selling tremendously. I believe I could have written a dozen hits that year, had my managers given me free rein.

My advice to anybody, not only to song writers, is: Don't try to write love ballads while suffering from indigestion.

A certain gentleman, a general agent for the Milwaukee road, came to see me one day, long before



Mrs. Charles K. Harris and daughter Ethel (1898)

The Rise of the Illustrated Song

I thought of writing *Better Than Gold*, and said: "Mr. Harris, I have a proposition to offer you which I think will prove mutually beneficial both to you and to the road I represent. You must have observed the trade-mark of the Chicago, Milwaukee and St. Paul road on all the tickets, printed matter, and ticket agencies—a small red diamond with the name of the road printed thereon. I should like to have you use that trade-mark by placing it upon the corner of the title page of your new song. For that favor I will see that you and your family receive a year's pass to travel over our entire road."

"My friend, said I, "no legitimate publisher" would allow any advertising other than his own to be placed on any of his publications."

"All right," said he; "no harm in asking you."

"Not at all," said I, "and thanks for coming to see me."

A short while afterward another gentleman walked into my office and told me he represented the Seven Sutherland Sisters Hair Restorer Company, at that time located in Chicago. They were spending hundreds of dollars in advertising their wares. When he handed me his card I looked at him curiously. My hair was always so thick and curly that I was never in need of any hair restorer.

"I have a proposition to make you. I think I have a wonderful idea, which is to have you write

After the Ball

a song about the virtues of this wonderful hair restorer. It must be written by yourself, as, naturally, the public will be more interested in a well-known composer's name appearing upon it than that of an unknown writer."

I asked him how many copies he would buy.

"We will take 100,000 and pay you \$10,000."

I thanked him and turned down the proposition.

As I was returning one day from a visit to my Chicago office, there were quite a few traveling men congregated in the smoking car. In this crowd was John Plankinton, who owned the Plankinton Hotel, Milwaukee, and his business partner, Philip D. Armour, the pork packer. They were returning from Chicago, where they had attended a performance of the Metropolitan Opera Company, then playing their first engagement at the Auditorium. A reporter had met Mr. Armour after the show and asked him what he thought of the opera. Mr. Armour replied that Charlie Harris was good enough for him, which remark was widely quoted by the press throughout the country.

There was at that time a one-armed conductor on this train, traveling between Milwaukee and Chicago, who was very popular with all the traveling fraternity. After punching my ticket on this trip, the conductor turned to me and, pointing to Plankinton and Armour, asked if I knew the gentlemen

The Rise of the Illustrated Song

sitting opposite me. I replied that I knew who they were.

"I suppose they are the richest men in the West today," said the conductor.

Several of the other traveling men overheard the conductor's remark.

One of them said, "I wish I had a part of their dough."

"Well," spoke up his friend, "suppose you did. What would you do with it?"

"Do?" said the first man. "I would help some of my poor relatives and friends."

"That is a good wish," said the other fellow. "But, nevertheless, money is not everything in this world. If I knew my wish would be granted, I would wish I was a child again at my mother's knee."

The conductor listened to this conversation, and then said: "Boys, your wishes are very good; but I would wish for health and prosperity through the years that I am to live, for my baby, wife and home."

"You win," said the first traveling man, handing the conductor a cigar.

That gave me the idea for

BETTER THAN GOLD, OR THREE WISHES

In a Pullman palace smoker

Sat a number of bright men.

After the Ball

You could tell that they were drummers;
Nothing seemed to trouble them.
When up spoke a handsome fellow,
"Come, let's have a story, boys,
Something that will help to pass the time away."
"I will tell you how we'll manage,"
Said a bright knight of the grip.
"Let us have three wishes, something good and true.
We will give friend Bob the first chance;
He's the oldest gathered here."
Then they listened to a wish that's always new.

FIRST CHORUS

"Just to be a child again at mother's knee;
Just to hear her sing the same old melody;
Just to hear her speak in loving sympathy;
Just to kiss her lips again;
Just to have her fondle me with tender care;
Just to feel her dear soft fingers through my hair.
There is no wish in this world that can compare,
Just to be a child at mother's knee."

There they sat, those jolly drummers,
Not a sound that moment heard,
While their tears were slowly falling,
There was no man spoke a word.
For the memories of childhood days
Had touched their dear kind hearts,
When as children they had play'd at mother's knee.
Then at last the spell was broken
By another traveling man.

The Rise of the Illustrated Song

"Your attention for a moment I do crave;
I will tell you of one precious thing,
So dear to one and all,
'Tis a wish we long for to the very grave."

SECOND CHORUS

"Just enough of gold to keep me all my days;
Just enough with which some starving soul to save;
Just enough I wish to help me on my way;
Just enough to happy be;
Just enough to know I'll ne'er be poor again;
Just enough to drive away all sorrow's pain.
You may wish for many things, but all in vain.
Give to me what precious gold can buy."

The conductor passing through the train,
Stopped in the smoking car.
He had grown quite interested
In the stories told so far.
"Please excuse my interruption,
But I listened with delight
To your wishes, both of them so good and true.
Yet there is a wish that's dearer,
Better far than glittering gold,
Though a simple one perhaps you all will say.
'Tis a longing that is in my heart
Each moment of my life,
'Tis a gleam of sunshine strewn across my way."

"Just to open wide my little cottage door
Just to see my baby rolling on the floor;

After the Ball

Just to feel that I have something to adore;
Just to be at home again;
Just to hear a sweet voice calling papa dear;
Just to know my darling wife is standing near.
You may have your gold your lonely heart to cheer,
But I'll take my baby, wife and home."

I then made arrangements to take photographs for the illustrations of *Better Than Gold*. The first essential was to get a Pullman car, as the principal scenes were to be taken therein. Thinking of my friend, the same gentleman whose proposition I had turned down previously, I tackled him in his office.

"Impossible, my dear Harris," said he. "It would be a good advertisement for your song, but I cannot see where it would help our road any. Good day."

Surely this was paying me back in my own coin. Nevertheless, that did not discourage me. There is always some man higher up in the railroad business, the same as in politics. So I tackled John A. Hinsey, general superintendent of the road, located in Union Station, Milwaukee. After a great deal of patient waiting, I was ushered into the presence of the great man, a grim old Irishman who had risen from the ranks and who knew the railroad business from A to Z. He was one of the kindest man that ever lived, but you would not know it judging from his gruff voice and grim manner.

I laid my proposition before him and said: "I

The Rise of the Illustrated Song

saw a model of your new train which is to make a fast run between Chicago and Minneapolis daily."

This was the first fast train, long before the Twentieth Century was put on between New York and Chicago. He arose from his chair, his eyes agleam, walked over to where a model of the train was standing, and looked at it with pride. It was beautiful, and I stood there admiring it for a few moments.

"Young man," said he, "this train is going to revolutionize the railroad business, and the Milwaukee road will get the credit. What do you think of it?"

"Great!" said I, and I meant it. "See here, Mr. Hinsey, is that car ready yet?"

"It will be in the yard on Sunday next, complete, where it will be shown all day to visitors."

"Will you allow me," said I, "to have my photographer take a picture of the train as she stands, and also use the interior of the smoking car?"

I explained why I wanted it, and told him that the slides would be shown in every vaudeville theater, not alone in this country but in Europe as well, and that the name on the train, the Chicago, Milwaukee and St. Paul, would be read by millions of people. He wrote an order immediately to the yardmaster to allow me the use of the car, as well as that of the one-armed conductor.

"Be there around nine A. M., as the yard will be opened to visitors at noon," said Mr. Hinsey.

After the Ball

I met four traveling men who were stopping at the Plankinton House and explained to them what I wanted. I notified my photographer, and on Sunday morning we took the pictures for *Better Than Gold*. The photographer took a photograph of the outside of the train and then photographed the interior.

I got in touch with the Silvers, the well-known singers of illustrated songs, who were soon to play the Alhambra Theater, Milwaukee; sent them a set of slides to Chicago, and told them to learn the song and put it on the following week in my home town. I then sent invitations to Mr. and Mrs. Hinsey, to the agent, to the one-armed conductor and his family, as well as to several officials of the Milwaukee road, asking them to be my guests at the theater the opening night to hear the song. Unknown to them, I sat directly back of my guests that night.

When the Silvers' turn came, there flashed upon the white sheet: "A new song written by your popular townsman, Mr. Charles K. Harris, entitled *Better Than Gold*." The first scene flashed was the beautiful train, all lit up. It received a wonderful ovation. As the song proceeded, the scene of the interior of the smoking car was flashed, where the traveling men were all seated, smoking and chatting. When the one-armed conductor entered, he was recognized by the audience and given a round of applause. The song was a veritable success. After its rendition,

The Rise of the Illustrated Song

the officials of the road crowded around to congratulate me, saying it was one of the best advertisements their road had ever received. Even my friend, the agent, was delighted.

The trials and tribulations in trying to procure original slides for my various songs in those days were terrific. *Hello, Central, Give Me Heaven* was a problem for me at the time, as I was receiving a great many requests for those slides. My first intention was to paint the interior of a telephone exchange and place the girl operators, sitting on chairs, before the telephone board; but it did not seem quite natural to me. So I went to see the manager of the Milwaukee Telephone Company and asked him to permit the use of the telephone room for a short while to take some photographs there. I was turned down cold.

The manager said: "My dear Mr. Harris, the working of this exchange is a secret, and must so remain to all outsiders."

"What is the great secret?" said I. "Do you think I'll steal the patents?"

"Not exactly, but no outsiders are ever permitted into the operators' room under any circumstances."

The following Saturday I was invited to attend a farewell dinner given to a very dear Chicago friend of mine who was sailing shortly for Europe, to be given at the Lakeside Club. Sitting beside me at

After the Ball

the dinner table, was Sol Bloom, our present congressman, who was then a music publisher in Chicago and a very dear and close friend of mine. Sitting next to me on the other side, was a distinguished-looking gentleman who was interested in my conversation with Bloom, as, naturally, when publishers get together they talk shop.

"What is your newest song?" said Sol.

"*Hello, Central, Give Me Heaven,*" said I.

"Good title," said Sol. "What's it about?"

I told him the story, and also recounted the troubles I was having in procuring the interior scene of a telephone exchange for taking the pictures for the slides.

The gentleman beside me then turned to me, saying, "I beg your pardon, but are you Mr. Harris, the author and publisher?"

"Yes," said I.

"My daughter sings a great many of your songs. I like them because they are clean and wholesome."

"Thank you," I replied.

"What about the telephone exchange? I heard part of your conversation with Mr. Bloom."

I explained.

"Why, that's simple. When would you like to use it?"

"Why, tomorrow morning if possible."

"All right," said he. "How about ten o'clock?"

"And you will fix it for me?"

The Rise of the Illustrated Song

"Certainly," said he, handing me his card, which read, "Mr. John A. Sloane, Vice-President of the Chicago Telephone Company." I almost fell out of my chair. "Don't thank me. I ought to thank you. I think it a wonderful advertisement, and am surprised our Milwaukee exchange did not grant you this courtesy."

I was there bright and early the following morning. They had some beautiful girls, who were delighted with the idea of sitting for their pictures. Under my direction they posed exactly the way I asked them to, with the result that when the slides of that scene were flashed, it always drew a big round of applause. I knew the audience always appreciated realism in a song, a story or a play. This song, with slides, was first introduced by Al Jolson, under the team of Jolson and Moore, and how that boy could sing it even at that time!

CHAPTER IX

Actors, Pluggers, and Tin Pan Alley

How James Corbett, Who Thought He Could Sing, Put One Over on Me—Terry McGovern and His "My Perfume Girl"—John Drew and Maude Adams—I Make a Hit as Dramatic Critic by Proxy—Eleanor Robson at Sweet Sixteen—Hyams and McIntyre—The Famous Roger Brothers—I Pass the Hat for a Coming Star—Fred Stone and Dave Montgomery—Two Bobs and Two Davids—Reminiscences of Tin Pan Alley—Its Who's Who It's Pluggers—It's Song-Hits.

JAMES J. CORBETT, the celebrated prizefighter, was then appearing in a play called "The Naval Cadet." In the last scene of that play there was a prize ring, where Jim, as the hero, had a scrap with the villain and, naturally, knocked him out. To provide a more nautral setting for the scene, Jim employed about twenty-five supers, at twenty-five cents a night, to sit at the ringside and do the yelling, just as at regular prizefights.

Jim and I were great pals in those days. He thought he had a voice and could sing. He would

Actors, Pluggers, and Tin Pan Alley

make my office his headquarters and would bang away at my piano with one finger. He was infatuated with a song I had just then written entitled *Hearts*. It happened to be one of the most difficult songs I had ever written; but Jim tackled it until he got the chorus down pretty well. He would stop every friend he met on the street corner, in a café, or behind the stage and sing the chorus to him.

He said to me: "Some voice, hey, Charlie?"

I did not care to contradict him, since one punch in the jaw from Jim would have knocked me out for good. So I told him he had a wonderful voice; though it was a torture to me to have to listen to him daily.

One day he asked me to come to see him in his dressing room, saying that he grew lonesome between the acts. I obliged him. When the last act came, where he had his prizefight scene, he asked me to come with him and join the bunch of supers sitting around the ring and join in the applause to help the game along. "No one will recognize you in that gang, so what's the difference, Charlie?" Just to show him that I was a good sport, I told him I would come. Jim went through his performance and knocked out the villain, as usual, and the gallery gods yelled their approval.

Suddenly he reached out into the gang of supers, yanked me out by the collar into the middle of the ring, and said: "Ladies and gentlemen, I take great

After the Ball

pleasure in introducing to you the man who, together with its beer, made Milwaukee famous—Charles K. Harris, author of *After the Ball*.” I felt like dropping through the floor. All I could do was to stand there foolishly and bow. I heaved a sigh of relief when the curtain fell at last and relieved me of my embarrassment.

Another prizefighter I well remember is Terry McGovern, one of the greatest little fighters that ever pulled on a glove, who was then under the management of Sam Harris, now one of New York’s leading theatrical managers. At that time Terry was a big money-maker for Harris. He was training in Milwaukee for his big fight with Joe Gans, one of the greatest colored fighters this country has ever known. Naturally, Terry had all the Milwaukee fight fans rooting for him. When he was not exercising, Terry would come to my office and, like Jim Corbett, try to play the piano with one finger. One day he showed me a lyric he said he had written, and started in to sing it. I was afraid to laugh at him, as Terry was very sensitive; but I had a very hard time keeping a straight face,—the lyric was a scream, as was the music. The title was *My Perfume Girl*, and he thought it very attractive. He asked me to publish it for him, and I said I would think it over. A few months later I was surprised to see a copy of Terry’s song in one of the music-shop windows, published by a Chicago firm. That was



James J. Corbett

Actors, Pluggers, and Tin Pan Alley

about as far as that song ever got, as it was never heard of after that.

A new show was then being advertised to open at the Davidson Theater, Milwaukee, which was quite an event in those days. I was still correspondent of the New York *Dramatic News* at the time and was eager to see the play. It was called "The Masked Ball," starring John Drew. Its manager was Ted Marks, for many years a well-known Broadway character, having managed many international theatrical stars. I met Marks before the show; and, knowing that I was correspondent for a New York dramatic paper, he was anxious to get a good write-up for the new show before it came to New York. We walked over to the Schlitz Palm Garden and had some refreshments. Marks said this show was going to be the biggest hit that ever struck Milwaukee. Of course, I had heard that remark before from other advance men.

"Say, Harris," said Marks, "let me write this article myself and wire it in to your paper, signing your name to it. It will be a big feather in your cap, especially when they hear of its wonderful success and how you called the turn."

I felt pretty good by then, as Marks had insisted on doing all the treating. When he had written the review I glanced over it and said: "But suppose this show is a frost; I will then lose my job."

But Marks insisted the show would be a big thing.

After the Ball

I wired in the article just as he had written it, feeling deep down in my heart that this was the end of my days as a theatrical reporter. I went in to see the show. In a certain scene where she was supposed to be intoxicated, the young lady playing opposite John Drew created a sensation. She acted this part so naturally that the house came down with applause. That little lady was Maude Adams.

Next morning all the critics with one accord acclaimed "The Masked Ball," with John Drew and Maude Adams, an unqualified success. The New York *Dramatic News* was the first paper to receive the news, which proved, of course, that their correspondent in Milwaukee was wide awake and knew his business. I received a fine letter from Leander Richardson, the editor, congratulating me upon my foresight, though all the glory belonged to my friend Ted Marks; and many a laugh we had over this incident in later years.

There was another young lady who was making good in Milwaukee at that time with the Thanhauser Stock Company, playing leads, beginning with "Sweet Lavender," and for whom all the papers were predicting a great future. Her mother often came to my office, where she would read all the latest New York dramatic papers. Every manager or singer in town would make a bee line for my office, where I had a large table set out in a room on which all the dramatic papers and magazines

Actors, Pluggers, and Tin Pan Alley

could be found. This little girl, who was sixteen at the time, was Eleanor Robson. Her mother told me that she had played in stock in the West and that she hoped some day Eleanor would be seen by some New York manager, as it was her ambition to see her daughter a star. I am glad to say that she saw that day, as a few years later Miss Robson played in "The Dawn of Tomorrow," a performance which many will remember.

There also came to my office one day a friend from whom I often bought cigars, with his daughter—a very pretty little girl of about fifteen. Anxious to have her adopt the stage as a profession, my friend brought her for me to hear her sing. She had a very sweet and pleasing voice; all she lacked was stage experience. Charles Horwitz and Fred Bowers were laying off in Milwaukee at the time. I introduced the little singer to Horwitz, who took her in hand and taught her several songs, as well as how to enter and make her exit from the stage, training her faithfully for nearly four weeks. She then procured an engagement in vaudeville and instantly made a hit. This young lady was Miss Leila McIntyre, who a few years later married Johnny Hyams; and, under the team name of Hyams & McIntyre, they remained on the stage together for more than twenty years. They have a beautiful daughter, who, I have no doubt, will follow in her mother's footsteps.

After the Ball

With much pleasure I noticed one day that the Rogers Brothers were to play my town. What names to conjure with in the early 80's! Gus and Max were German comedians and singers, playing with Maude Raymond—Mrs. Gus Rogers—who was the ingénue. Their company was a splendid one and their names were household words throughout the West. Maurice Levi conducted their orchestra as well as composed all the songs for the show. We were together nightly and made a merry bunch.

I was anxious to get the publication rights to their compositions; but Gus, the head of the concern, said they were publishing their own music under the name of Rogers Brothers, but, should anything occur which would prevent their handling that business, I would get the first call.

They played several seasons with great success, when Gus at last came to me and said: "I have decided to get out of the music business. I find that we cannot handle both ends properly. When I get back to New York I will turn over all the publication rights to you."

Naturally, I was highly elated; but when Gus returned to New York he was taken suddenly ill and died. Max tried to go it alone under the management of Klaw & Erlanger; but he was lost without his brother. Consequently the show closed, and Max never again returned to the stage. Thus ended the career of two very popular German comedians.

Actors, Pluggers, and Tin Pan Alley

Maude Raymond also retired from the stage.

While on a visit to my Chicago office, a sweet young girl of about twelve and a serious-looking woman came in to inquire whether we had any new songs that would suit the former. Max Hoffman, my pianist, husband of Gertrude Hoffman, the celebrated dancer and comedienne, played over several songs for her. After they had gone, I asked Hoffman who they were. He said they were new ones as far as he was concerned, but that there were a great many amateur singers playing the hotel parlors at the time, and he supposed the little girl was one of them.

I was stopping with my family at the Hotel Del Prado for the summer. After dinner it was the custom of the guests to sit around in the large parlor to smoke and chat. This same woman and little girl walked into the lobby and, spying me, came over to me.

The mother said: "Oh, Mr. Harris, will you kindly arrange with the manager of the hotel to allow my little daughter to sing a few numbers and give imitations?"

I did so. After the little girl had finished her act, I passed the hat and collected quite a large sum of money, which I turned over to her. That little girl was Elsie Janis, who is today one of the well-known stars in the country.

I recall that a few years later, when I had moved

After the Ball

to New York, as I was sitting with Louis Werba in Considine's Café, Broadway and Forty-second Street, where all the profession congregated at that time, Miss Janis and her mother were seated at the next table. They were delighted to see me. Miss Janis told me that Ziegfeld was going to allow her to do a few imitations the opening night of his Follies on the New York Roof. She was so happy. After they had gone I made a bet with Louis Werba that if Elsie did go on she would be the hit of the bill. The opening night, between the first and second acts, Miss Janis was announced as an added attraction. True to my prediction, she created a sensation, and the next night her name was displayed in electric lights as the feature of the Follies.

Two very popular actors who played Milwaukee in the Wizard of Oz company were Montgomery and Stone. We were inseparable companions for the week the show played. Later, when they went under the management of Charles B. Dillingham, I sent for Fred Stone and told him I had just published a new song, written by Bob Adams, entitled *Christina Swanson*, and asked him to sing and interpolate it in the new show. He did; and he sang the song the entire season, creating a great demand for it. The two actors were a wonderful team, and Dave Montgomery's death was felt as a great loss to the stage. Since then Fred Stone, his wife, and

Actors, Pluggers, and Tin Pan Alley

daughter have scored a great success in their new show, "Stepping Stones." Fred is still the same big-hearted boy he was when we first met twenty-five years ago.

Bob Adams and Bob Alden were two song pluggers at that time, employed in my Chicago office. They wrote several comedy-song hits which I published for them. They decided to write a sketch for themselves and get a vaudeville engagement; but, for some reason or other, they were not successful as a vaudeville team. They came to New York just about the time I opened my New York office. I was pleased to see them. They tried to get an engagement, but to no avail. Having no reputation in vaudeville, they could get no opening, and both were very much discouraged.

I told the boys the best thing for them to do was to go to London. B. Feldman, one of the most enterprising publishers over there, was a hustler and was known to all the managers of vaudeville throughout England. I gave the two Bobs a letter to Mr. Feldman, and also wrote him personally, asking him to try to get the boys an engagement. I bought them their tickets, took them to the boat, and wished them godspeed. The result was as I predicted. Mr. Feldman procured them engagements in the halls in London. They were a big hit from

After the Ball

the very opening performance—about the biggest hit in London of any American boys that ever played there. They were known as the Two Bobs and played two and three halls nightly. They both married English actresses and now own their own homes over there.

One day Al Woods, who was then of the firm of Woods, Sullivan & Harris, producers of melodramas—such as “Nellie, the Beautiful Cloak Model,” and many others of the type—asked my permission to use one of my song titles which they wished to produce as a play. I handed him a list and told him to take his choice, with the exception of *After the Ball*. He chose *Cast Aside*. The play opened and proved very successful. Al followed it with two other plays written around my songs, *Fallen by the Wayside* and *One Night in June*, both of which made money for the firm.

Twenty-five years later I read in a theatrical paper that all of Al Woods' melodramas, including my three old songs, were to be sold to a big picture-producing concern and turned into moving pictures. I wrote Mr. Woods, explaining that I had been willing to let him use my songs for plays, but reserved the rights of my titles for moving pictures. He answered that I was right, that the three titles belonged to me, and thanked me for calling his attention to the matter.

Actors, Pluggers, and Tin Pan Alley

I shall never forget the first time I met Dave Warfield. He was playing with a company in Milwaukee at the time, and I introduced him to the Tombstone Club. While watching his performance, although he had only a small part, I felt that Dave had it in him to become a star some day. He told me that he had been engaged by Weber & Fields for their music hall in New York and that this was going to be his first big chance. He made good as far as his part of the performance was concerned, but he was only one of many actors then playing with Weber & Fields. While visiting New York I dropped in to see the Weber & Fields performance. After the show I met Dave, who was delighted to see me. He took my arm and we walked down Broadway to a well-known restaurant, then patronized by nearly all the profession playing Broadway—Martin's.

Warfield said confidentially: "Charles, I am in a quandary. My season closes here shortly with Weber & Fields, and they want me to sign up for another season."

"Well," said I, "why don't you? Your money is safe, and they are good boys. You are with a great cast and are getting a reputation."

"Yes," said he, "that may be true; but I have something else on my mind that I want to tell you about. A dear friend of mine, author of many famous plays, named David Belasco, has a play called

After the Ball

The Auctioneer and wants to star me in the production."

"Are you going to accept his proposition?" I asked.

"Well, that's the question. You see, it might be a failure, and then where would I get off?"

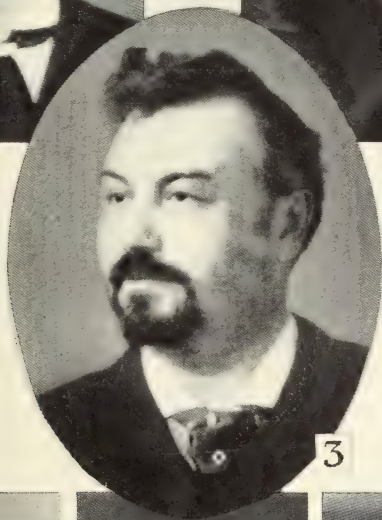
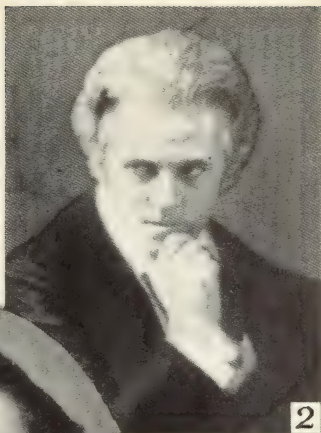
"But, Dave," said I, "you will then have been a star; and even though the play proves a frost, the managers will not blame you. Once having been a star, you will be entitled to more money from other managers."

"There is something in that," said he. "I will think it over."

A few months later I read in our local papers that David Warfield was to appear at the Davidson Theater in a new play staged by David Belasco, entitled "*The Auctioneer*." With my father, mother and wife, I occupied a box on the opening night. What a performance Warfield gave! There was not a dry eye in the house when the curtain fell on the last act. He received a wonderful ovation. I was proud of my friend and was glad that he had accepted Mr. Belasco's proposition to star. I met him after the show and escorted him across the street to the Palm Garden.

When I introduced him to my family, my mother kept looking at him rather strangely, and then said: "But, Mr. Warfield, where is Rachel?"

Dave was taken aback for a moment. Rachel



- (1) John Drew
- (2) David Warfield
- (3) Oscar Hammerstein
- (4) Maude Adams
- (5) Reginald DeKoven
- (6) Eleanor Robson (Mrs. August Belmont)

Actors, Pluggers, and Tin Pan Alley

was the name of Dave's wife in the play, and my mother was still dreaming of the play she had just witnessed—it all appeared so real to her.

"Why, Mrs. Harris," said he, "she is not my real wife; she is only my stage wife."

"Oh," said mother, "I forgot. It was all so natural that I thought you would surely walk in here with her."

We all had a good laugh, especially Dave, who always maintained that that was the greatest compliment any artist could receive.

Dave followed that success with "The Music Master," and everyone knows of that wonderful masterpiece, also staged by Mr. Belasco. Warfield is in the millionaire class today, but he deserves every dollar he has. I know how hard he worked for it, how he studied, and how he saved. The height of his ambition was realized when he played "Shylock," his favorite character, in New York last season, which all the critics proclaimed his masterpiece.

In 1898 I visited my office in New York, on Twenty-eighth Street, and my memory will always cling around dear old Tin Pan Alley, whose soul-stirring times I often recall. It was only one block long, bounded on the East by Broadway and on the West by Sixth Avenue. What a lane of hilarious melody!—Tin-pan pianos working overtime, day

After the Ball

and night, continuously, and I doubt if such a happy-go-lucky crowd of boys ever congregated on one block in any street before.

One of the earliest of the popular-song publishers on this street was the firm of M. Witmark & Sons. At that time the head of the firm was about twenty years of age, his brother Julius was about eighteen, and Jay about fifteen. Talk about hustlers! They certainly were wonderful boys. M. Witmark, the dad of them all, had formerly been a printer owning a small printing establishment. The first song they published was *The Picture Turned To the Wall*, followed by *The Sunshine of Paradise Alley*, and many other popular songs of the day.

Just next door to this concern were two San Francisco boys who had opened up a publishing house and taken a chance in the big city. They were Broder & Schlam.

Sandwiched in between these two firms was the New York *Clipper*, which was the means of bringing thousands of professional singers and actors to Tin Pan Alley.

F. A. Mills, known as Kerry Mills, a writer and publisher, was directly opposite the New York *Clipper*. He published *Rastus on Parade*, *Happy Days in Dixie*, *Whistling Rufus*, and *At a Georgia Camp Meeting*.

Next door to Mills was another song writer,

Actors, Pluggers, and Tin Pan Alley

Charles B. Ward, who had just gone into the publishing business with a big song-hit. There was a large canvas sign stretched across his building advertising the name of the song, *And the Band Played On*. Ward was very popular and a great many singers visited his office.

Opposite was the Harry Von Tilzer Music Publishing Company, announcing its big hit in large letters on its windows—*My Old New Hampshire Home*.

The Leo Feist Music Publishing Company also was located on that block and was plugging Abe Holzman's new instrumental hit, *Smoky Mokes*. While, not to be outdone, next door was Joseph Stern & Co., advertising *Sweet Rosy O'Grady* and *The Little Lost Child*.

Howley, Haviland & Dresser were publishing all of Paul Dresser's songs, among them *On the Banks of the Wabash*.

H. W. Petrie, too, was located in this block, publishing his own compositions, such as *I Don't Want to Play in Your Yard*.

Shapiro, Bernstein & Co. were hustling along, making a name for themselves.

Jerome Remick, the Detroit music publisher, also had an office located in Tin Pan Alley. Doty & Brill, two live young writers, were composing and publishing there.

My staff at that time consisted of Jules Ruby and

After the Ball

Leo Wood, song pluggers; Al LaRue, arranger; Meyer Cohen, general manager and plugger.

Tin Pan Alley in those days always reminded me of Baxter Street, where the clothing men held forth and where, if a stranger happened to pass through the street, the puller-in saw to it that he did not leave without buying a suit of clothes or an overcoat. The same thing happened daily in Tin Pan Alley, where the song pluggers, from early morning until late at night, stood in front of their respective publishing houses waiting for singers to come along, when they would grab them by the arm and hoist them into the music studios. There was no escape. Once the singers entered the block, they left it with a dozen songs crammed into their pockets and the singers' promises ringing in the pluggers' ears,—promises to sing the newly acquired compositions. Each song plugger had his own clientele of friends who would stand by him through thick and thin, until some more enterprising plugger would offer them more money, which, naturally, would switch their allegiance. Keen rivalry existed among the publishing houses at that time, and publishers were continually hearing of scrapping among the pluggers on account of their stealing one another's pet singers.

Fourteenth Street was then the Mecca of the song pluggers as well as of the publishers. As soon as the lamps were lit, the pluggers would cluster around Tony Pastor's, that being their headquarters, where,

Actors, Pluggers, and Tin Pan Alley

if not at their hotels and boarding houses close by, all the singers could usually be found. It was a common sight any night to see the pluggers, with pockets full of professional copies, stop the singers on the street and lead them to the first lamp-post, where the plugger would sing a song from a professional copy. It mattered not how many people were passing at the time. "Anything to land a singer" was their motto.

Tony Pastor was very lenient both to the popular-song pluggers, and to the publishers, allowing them back of the stage at all times to interview the singers, while old door-man Henderson, a fixture for more than twenty years, passed many of them into the theater through the front entrance.

But the song pluggers were not the only solicitors for their respective publishers; the heads of the concerns were also out doing their bit at the same time. Not only did they hustle in their respective publishing houses during the day, but as soon as they were through with their dinner, their work started all over again at night. On Fourteenth Street in those times you could see, walking nightly, such men as Ed Marks and his partner, Joe Stern; Kerry Mills; the Witmark boys; Pat Howley; Harry Von Tilzer; and Meyer Cohen. They all kept their eagle eyes open for a singer or an orchestra leader whom to induce to use their respective compositions.

The singers themselves were never neglected in

After the Ball

those days. They certainly had a good time of it, as the pluggers and the publishers fed them up with cigars, drinks, and food of all kinds *gratis*. In order that a firm's song might be heard in different cities, many a singer's board bill was paid and many a new trunk, together with a railroad ticket, was purchased by the particular firm whose song the singer was exploiting. The publishers spent their money freely, their slogan being, "Anything and everything to land a hit." There was no system, no set rules, no combination of publishers, no music publishers' association; simply, do as you please, everybody for himself, and the devil take the hindmost.

No two publishers were friendly—very seldom even passed the time of day together. The rivalry was too keen. So it went on for several years. Hits came and hits went. New publishers came and some of the old publishers departed. Gradually they moved uptown, all of them locating in what is known as the Roaring Forties and as far up as Fifty-second Street and Broadway. If in the years to come, the theatrical district should move farther uptown, you will find the publishers located close by. As the vaudeville and musical-comedy theaters depend on the popular-song publishers for their music, it is only natural that they should wish to keep in close touch with each other.

The following song-hits were prevalent in the old Tin Pan Alley days:

Actors, Pluggers, and Tin Pan Alley

<i>My Wild Irish Rose</i>	Chauncy Olcott
<i>Won't You Come to My Tea Party</i>	Albert H. Fitz
<i>Honeysuckle and the Bee</i>	" " "
<i>The Moth and the Flame</i>	Max S. Witt
<i>My Mother was a Lady</i>	Stern and Marks
<i>Sweet Adeline</i>	Harry Armstrong
<i>Ideal of My Dreams</i>	Herbert Ingraim
<i>All That I Ask Is Love</i>	" "
<i>Nobody</i>	Bert Williams
<i>Just as the Sun Went Down</i>	Lynn Udall
<i>Honey, Stay in Your Own Back Yard</i>	" "
<i>The Girl I Left Behind</i>	John T. Kelly
<i>Where the River Shannon Flows</i>	Lyric—Bartley Costello Music—Russell Brothers
<i>Mandy Lee</i>	Thurlan Thattaway
<i>Little Black Me</i>	" "
<i>White Wings</i>	Banks Winter
<i>Silver Threads Among the Gold</i>	Lyric—Wm. Danks Music—Eben B. Rexford
<i>I Don't Want to Play in Your Yard</i>	H. W. Petrie
<i>The Bowery</i>	Percy Gaunt
<i>And the Band Played On</i>	Chas. B. Ward and John F. Palmer
<i>Answer</i>	Alfred Robyn
<i>You're the Only Pebble on the Beach</i>	Braisted and Carter

After the Ball

<i>Asleep in the Deep</i>	H. W. Petrie and Arthur J. Lamb
<i>Smiles</i>	Lee S. Roberts
<i>School Days</i>	Gus Edwards
<i>She Was Bred in Old Kentucky</i>	Braisted and Carter
<i>The Girl I Left in Sunny Tennessee</i>	“ “ “
<i>I Can't Believe Her Faithless</i>	Paul Dresser
<i>The Pardon 'Came too Late</i>	“ “
<i>Just Tell Them that You Saw Me</i>	“ “
<i>The Convict and the Bird</i>	“ “
<i>I Believe It for My Mother Told Me, So</i>	“ “
<i>The Blue and the Gray</i>	“ “
<i>On the Banks of the Wabash</i>	“ “
<i>Hot Time in the Old Town Tonight</i>	Theo Metz
<i>My Sweetheart's the Man in the Moon</i>	James Thornton
<i>Daddy Wouldn't Buy Me a Bow-wow</i>	Bobby Newcomb
<i>The Old Red Shawl</i>	Chas. Moreland
<i>Anybody Here Seen Kelly?</i>	Wm. KcKenna
<i>Margarete</i>	Chas. A. White
<i>Put Me in My Little Bed</i>	“ “ “

Actors, Pluggers, and Tin Pan Alley

<i>Because</i>	Horwitz and Bowers
<i>Always</i>	“ “ “
<i>Under the Shade of the Old Apple Tree</i>	Harry Williams and Egbert Van Alstine
<i>Smokey Mokes</i>	Abe Holzman
<i>My Old New Hampshire Home</i>	Harry Von Tilzer
<i>In the Good Old Summer- time</i>	Evans and Shields
<i>Isle D'Mour</i>	Leo Edwards
<i>When You Were Sweet Sixteen</i>	James Thornton
<i>Georgia Camp Meeting</i>	Kerry Mills
<i>Bedalia</i>	Jerome and Schwartz
<i>Down Went McGinty to the Bottom of the Sea</i>	Joe Flynn
<i>My Gal is a Highborn Lady</i>	Barney Fagen
<i>Daisy Bell</i>	Harry Dacre
<i>Oh, Promise Me</i>	Reginald DeKoven
<i>Ta Ra Ra Boom de Ay</i>	Sayers and Angelo
<i>When the Robins Nest Again</i>	Frank Howard
<i>Two Little Girls in Blue</i>	Chas. Grahame
<i>The Picture Turned to the Wall</i>	“ “
<i>Sweet Rosy O'Grady</i>	Maude Nugent
<i>Hiawatha</i>	James O'Day and Chas. Daniels

After the Ball

<i>Oh, Mister Moon</i>	Andrew Mack
<i>Dearie</i>	Claire Kummer
<i>Sweet Bunch of Daisies</i>	Anita Owens
<i>Only One Girl in the World for Me</i>	Dave Marion
<i>Just a Small Room, but It's Home</i>	" "
<i>Say Au Revoir, but Not Good-bye</i>	Harry Kennedy
<i>Mollie and I and the Baby Empty is the Cradle, Ba- by's Gone</i>	" "
<i>Maggie Murphy's Home</i>	Harrigan and Hart
<i>Mulligan Guards</i>	" " "
<i>Paddy Duffy's Cart</i>	" " "
<i>Telegraph My Baby</i>	George M. Cohan
<i>Throw Him Down Mc- Clusky</i>	John Kernell
<i>When the Cat Came Back</i>	H. S. Miller
<i>The Sweetest Story Ever Told</i>	R. M. Stults
<i>Rock-a-Bye Baby, On the Tree Top</i>	Effie Canning
<i>Don't Leave Your Mother, Tom</i>	Maude Beverly
<i>I Am a Little Girl of Four</i>	Fay Templeton
<i>Always Take Mother's Advice</i>	Jennie Lindsay
<i>When the Leaves Begin to Turn</i>	Isabel Stone

Actors, Pluggers, and Tin Pan Alley

<i>Hush Little Baby, Don't You Cry</i>	Lotta Crabtree
<i>The Light House by the Sea</i>	Gusse L. Davis
<i>In the Baggage Coach Ahead</i>	" " "
<i>Sweet Marie</i>	Lyric—Cy Warman Music—Raymond Moore
<i>Sweet Nellie Bawn</i>	H. R. Williams
<i>Sand Man is Coming</i>	Henry Robeson
<i>Little Johnny Dugan</i>	Thomas LeMac
<i>Do, Do, My Huckleberry Do</i>	The Dillons
<i>Mamie, Come Kiss Your Honey Boy</i>	D. L. White
<i>Comrades</i>	Felix McGlennoh
<i>What is Love</i>	" "
<i>With All Her Faults I Love Her Still</i>	Monroe H. Rosenfeld
<i>The Babies on our Block</i>	Dave Graham
<i>Could I Only Pick a Winner</i>	Billy Emerson
<i>Is Everybody Happy?</i>	Ernest Hogan
<i>Under the Bamboo Tree</i>	Cole and Johnson
<i>Come Down, My Evening Star</i>	John Stromberg
<i>Rosey, You are My Posey</i>	" "
<i>Only Me</i>	Ford and Bratton
<i>Sue Dear</i>	Ford and Bratton

CHAPTER X

Adelina Patti

The Shubert Brothers—The Advent of the Show Girl—"The Last Farewell"—I Land a Prize-Ballad with The Ladies' Home Journal—Julian Eltinge—Madame Mantelli Popularizes my Ballad, "I Am Trying So Hard To Forget You"—I Discover and Grau Engages Edith Helena—Evans and Shields—A New Idea of Making a Song Popular—Irving Berlin—A Song by the Author of "Irene"—Some Newspaper Men Who Would Write Lyrics.

WHILE still correspondent for the New York paper, I called on the manager of a minstrel company then playing at the Bijou Theater. I was introduced to a short slim chap, the youngest manager I had ever met, who looked to me to be about fourteen.

"Say," said I, "are you really the manager of this show?"

"What's the matter with me?" said he.

"Nothing. I thought the boys were joshing me."

I met him several times afterward with other shows. He was always so busy that he never had time to talk with anyone for two minutes at a time.

Adelina Patti

While he was talking with you, he would suddenly scoot off like a shot. Years afterward I did a great deal of business with this little fellow and his brothers. This young manager was Sam Shubert. I never dreamed at our first meeting how closely we would be associated in later years.

When I located in New York my ambition was to publish a musical show, so that I might get my name on the map as a full-fledged music publisher. I had published the music of a small musical show running at the time in Chicago under the management of Leo Teller, now manager of the Broadway Theater, Brooklyn. The book was by Addison Burkhart and the music by Raymond Hubbell, called *Chow Chow*. The show contained some very catchy musical numbers.

Remembering Sam Shubert, I called to see him at his New York office, where he cordially greeted me and introduced me to his brothers, Lee and Jake. I told them all about the little musical show which was running in Chicago. They asked if I had any of the songs with me. I did have them, and my manager, Meyer Cohen, immediately opened up a roll of music and sang several songs, which seemed to interest all the Shubert boys.

Sam said to Jake: "Run on to Chicago, look the show over, and report back."

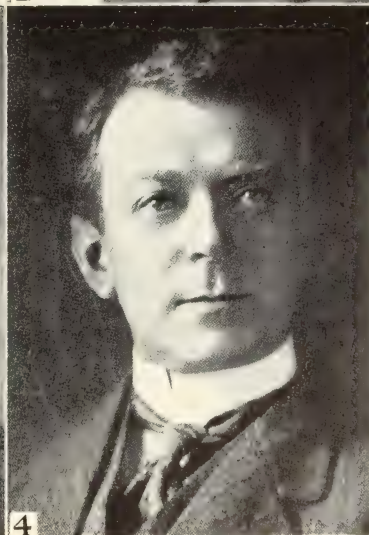
Jake was about seventeen at the time, and I laughed to think that a young kid like Jake could

After the Ball

report upon the merits of a show. He went, all right, and his answer was to sign it up, as it looked good. As I controlled the publishing rights, we made the arrangement with the proprietors of the show and with the author and composer on a royalty basis. Sam told me he thought it would be wise to have the author and composer come to New York and consult with them, as he wanted them to fix the entire show up and have it rewritten for a Broadway production.

I sent for Hubbell and Burkhart and took them over to see the Shuberts, who laid out the plans for them. The boys worked faithfully on the book and added several new songs. This was not only the Shuberts' first big musical production, but marked also the first advent of the show girl. The musical show was to open at the Casino Theater, and the Shuberts, the papers said, were going to spend a fortune on its production—\$50,000 spent on a musical show was considered a fortune in those days.

Among the artists were Fay Templeton, Helene Lord, and Arthur Dunn, the comedian. The late Arthur Weld was the leader of the orchestra. Under its new name of the "The Runaways," the show opened and was an instantaneous success. After playing through the season, it was sent on the road, where it duplicated its New York success. Many of its songs became big hits. One of them I specially recall, as sung by Arthur Dunn, *A Kiss for Each*



- (1) Jacob J. Shubert
(2) Lee Shubert
(3) Martin Beck
(4) Gustav Luders

Adelina Patti

Day in the Week. *My Susanna from Havana* was a hit also.

About this time I received a letter from Robert Grau, brother of Maurice Grau, then manager of the Metropolitan Opera Company, in which he asked me to write a song for the celebrated diva, Adelina Patti, for her coming American farewell concert tour. On receiving that letter I took a run to New York to meet Mr. Grau and find out what kind of a song would please that eminent artist. It was a well-known fact that except for *Suwanee River* and *Home, Sweet Home* she had never sung a popular song by an American composer. Mr. Grau invited me to spend the night with him at his home in New Rochelle, so that he could talk the matter over with me. I gladly accepted his kind invitation and met his charming wife and daughter.

"What is your idea," said I, "for a song?"

"Well," said Mr. Grau, "it's going to be Patti's last farewell. I doubt if she will ever appear in this country again. It must be a song that will touch the hearts of her audience—simple and sympathetic."

"I like that title," said I.

"What title?" said Grau.

"The one you have just mentioned—*The Last Farewell.*"

"By Jove," said he, "that isn't bad!"

That night when I repaired to my room I asked Mr. Grau to supply me with pencils and paper, as

After the Ball

THE LAST FAREWELL

CHAS. K. HARRIS.

Andante.
Piano.

The birds still sing, the church bells ring, The roses rare perfume the
 It seems so sweet once more to meet, To know and feel your love is
 air. The fire-flies glow, the soft winds blow A-round the dear old Home Sweet
 real. And here to night, with faces bright, Your hearts have shown, I'm wel-come
 Home In mem-o-ry a-gain, I hear The voices sweet of par-ents
 home And yet it seems but yes-ter-day I sang the same sweet mel-o-
 dear. As gen-ly they would soothe my fears, And kiss a-way those child-ish tears.
 Old hap-py days, you could not last, Good-bye dear friends, the dream is past.

Adelina Patti

2 Refrain.

So fare thee well, old home, fare-well for - ev - er, — Good-bye, old friends, we'll nev-er meet a -

gain. — Tho' sad my heart, yet sad-der is the part - ing, — But sad-der

still to breathe the last good - bye. — And all the kind - ness that you've al-ways shown me, — Each gen-tle

word is gra-ven on my heart, — Al though I smile, yet still my tears are flow - ing, And just be-

cause, it is the last fare-well — cause, it is the last, it is the last, the — last fare - well. —

A piacere.

D.C. *A piacere.* *5va*

The musical score is written for voice and piano. It begins with a '2' and the word 'Refrain.' The melody is in a key with one sharp (F#) and a 2/4 time signature. The lyrics are written below the vocal line. The score consists of several systems of music. The first system includes the lyrics 'So fare thee well, old home, fare-well for - ev - er, — Good-bye, old friends, we'll nev-er meet a -'. The second system continues with 'gain. — Tho' sad my heart, yet sad-der is the part - ing, — But sad-der'. The third system has 'still to breathe the last good - bye. — And all the kind - ness that you've al-ways shown me, — Each gen-tle'. The fourth system contains 'word is gra-ven on my heart, — Al though I smile, yet still my tears are flow - ing, And just be-'. The fifth system starts with 'cause, it is the last fare-well — cause, it is the last, it is the last, the — last fare - well. —'. This is followed by a section marked '*A piacere.*' and then a section marked '*D.C.*' and '*A piacere.*'. The score ends with a '5va' marking, indicating a five-octave repeat or a specific performance instruction.

After the Ball

I intended to write the song right then. In the morning, after breakfast, we repaired to the music room, where I played *The Last Farewell*, to the great surprise of Mr. and Mrs. Grau and their daughter. They said it was just the song for the diva.

Mr. Grau said: "I intend leaving next month for Paris, where I am to meet her, and then will spend a week with her at her castle, Craig-y-noys; I shall cable you her reply as to whether she will sing your song."

I told him I intended moving to New York and making my headquarters there, and would spend the summer at the West End Hotel, Long Branch; and Grau made note of the fact. I had rented two floors in a new building at 31 West Thirty-first Street, next to Muschenheim's restaurant, called the Arena. In two weeks I was settled and ready to do business. To the surprise of all the other publishers, who considered Thirty-first Street too far uptown at the time, I closed my Twenty-eighth Street office, then located in Tin Pan Alley.

I certainly enjoyed myself at the West End Hotel, then one of the leading hotels in Long Branch, especially so as Pete Dailey, who was the leading comedian of the Weber & Fields Music Hall, together with his wife, was among its guests. We were always together and I confided to Pete about the song for the diva. He laughed heartily and said

Adelina Patti

I stood as much chance of inducing Patti to sing one of my songs as he had of being engaged by the Metropolitan Opera Company in place of Jean de Reszke; and at that my heart fell.

"Well, Pete," said I, "I have nothing to lose and everything to gain. If she does not sing it, I'll be just as well off. If she does sing it, it will be a feather in my cap. So let's not be hasty in judging Mr. Grau. I believe he is on the level and will try to have Patti sing my song."

Every morning at breakfast Pete would say: "Have you heard from Patsy? Any wires or cables?"

I was compelled to smile, my reply always being: "No, Pete, not yet, but soon."

The laugh was soon to be on Pete. One morning a cablegram from Paris was handed to me. For a moment before opening it I wondered what its contents might be, then eagerly opened it and read:

"Patti sang *Farewell* concert Paris. Big success. Will positively sing it on American tour. Congratulations.

"ROBERT GRAU."

I rushed over to Pete's room. He was shaving at the time. I ran in and slapped him on the back, yelling like a Comanche Indian, "Who's loony

After the Ball

now?" and flashing the cablegram before his eyes. Poor Pete almost slashed his throat in the excitement. "Read it, you old pessimist!" I cried.

His eyes were dim and his voice husky as he turned to me and said: "Charles, honestly I congratulate you from the bottom of my heart."

Dear old Pete, how I loved and admired him.

I shall never forget the day when Adelina Patti arrived in New York and put up at the Savoy Hotel. On Sunday morning I was called up by Mr. Grau who said that the diva wished to see me, as she was to open the following night at Carnegie Hall. That morning, when I arrived at the hotel, there was a mob trying to meet or get a glimpse of the famous diva. As soon as my name was announced, she sent down word to have me come up. There were at least a dozen maids, butlers, waiters and other servants fussing around her many trunks, taking out her various costumes and things. Reporters from every paper in New York crowded the hall. Baron Cedezström, her husband, stood in the doorway, with a smile, saying that the diva would not see anyone until the next morning at eleven o'clock. The baron escorted me into her suite and I was introduced to the famous Patti, who greeted me with outstretched arms, just as though she had known me all her life. I was taken aback with surprise at the cordiality of her reception, having expected to meet a haughty queen, and finding, instead, a bright, sprightly, dark-

Adelina Patti

haired little woman, as simple and unaffected as a child.

“Mr. Harris,” said she, “your song is so beautiful. It makes me so sad every time I sing it. Listen to these beautiful lines.”

She sat down at the piano and played and sang the song over for me, and I stood there entranced, as never in my experience had I heard a song sung with such feeling and expression as Patti gave to my simple little ballad.

I had engaged seats for the concert. The house was packed from pit to dome, a great many of the audience present having heard the diva sing when she was in her prime. Her pianist, Signor Sapeo, who played for her for many years, was her accompanist that night. She sang her most famous songs of bygone days—*Home, Sweet Home* and *Suwanee River*—and still the audience clamored for more; and at last she came down to the footlights, stretched out her hands to the audience as though she wished to clasp them all to her breast, and sang *The Last Farewell*. You could have heard a pin drop in that vast audience. I wonder if there was a dry eye in the house when she had finished.

A few years later I met Patti again in Karlsbad in one of the large gardens. She saw me and beckoned me to come to her, which I did. Both she and the baron greeted me most cordially. I remained with them for almost an hour.

After the Ball

"The baron will bring you a photograph of myself, which I wish you to accept with my compliments," she said.

I treasure this photograph to this day as one of my most cherished possessions. A year later I learned the sad news that Patti had passed away.

The Last Farewell was criticized unmercifully by a famous New York musical critic, who said that I must have lost all sense of rhythm, rime, and melody to perpetrate such a monstrosity of a song and foist it upon the market. This critic never even suspected that it was written especially to fit Patti's fast-failing voice and was really to be used as her swan song.

A few months later there appeared in *The Ladies' Home Journal* an offer of a prize of \$500 for the best ballad written by an American composer. The manuscripts were to be passed upon by the very musical critic who had panned Patti's song. I showed the announcement to Mr. Grau, who suggested that I write a song and send it in, but with my name spelled backward, Carl K. Sirrah. I wrote a song entitled *On the Sands at Night*, and submitted it to *The Ladies' Home Journal*. Imagine my surprise when a few months later I received a letter from its editor, Mr. Edward Bok, inclosing a check for \$500 and informing me that I had won the prize, my song having been passed on and O.K.'d by the celebrated musical critic above referred to. Naturally,

Adelina Patti

I could not cash the check under the name of Sirrah. Grau advised me to write to Mr. Bok and explain the joke to him. The song appeared in *The Ladies' Home Journal*, with my real name as author. This incident only goes to show that even music critics, like Homer, nod sometimes.

After Patti's tour Robert Grau occupied a desk in my office, as he had decided to engage in the booking of stars for vaudeville, which in those days was looked down upon, just as the movies were when they first started. One morning a handsome young man, fresh from college, came in and asked for Mr. Grau. I said I expected him at any moment and asked him whether he was on the stage. He said he was not, although he was very anxious to go on, having made a big hit in his last college show as a female impersonator. He certainly did not look like one at the time, as all those I had met previously were usually quite effeminate. He was a handsome, manly chap, and there was nothing effeminate about him. I asked him to sing for me, which he did in a low barytone voice.

"Have you any photographs of yourself as you appeared in your last show?" I asked.

The young man placed one on my desk, and I was nearly knocked off my feet as I beheld the likeness of what appeared to be one of the most beautiful girls I had ever seen. Any man would have fallen in love with that photograph if he did not know whose pic-

After the Ball

ture it was. I told him to come up the following morning so that I could introduce him to Mr. Grau. When Grau came in and I showed him the photo, he asked who the beauty was. The next morning the young chap returned and I introduced him to Mr. Grau, who immediately engaged him for Hammerstein's Roof Garden. At his first appearance he created a sensation. This young man was none other than Julian Eltinge.

When the Metropolitan Opera House closed for the season, one of its famous contraltos, wishing to take a plunge into vaudeville, came to see Mr. Grau. The eminent singer was Madame Mantelli.

I asked Grau if he could not get her to sing one of my new ballads. He replied: "Why not? If you could suit Patti, you certainly should suit her." When Madame Mantelli came to the office again, Grau told her that vaudeville and grand opera were quite different things, adding that the audience would stand for one or two high-class numbers, provided she sang also a popular song. She said she would be pleased to do so, if she could secure a good song. It happened that I had just written a new ballad, entitled *I'm Trying So Hard to Forget You*. Grau handed her this song, and the contralto sang it without a hitch. I shall never forget her opening performance at Hyde and Beaman's Theatre, Brooklyn. Her first number was an operatic selection,

Adelina Patti

followed by *Suwanee River*, then by another operatic number and finally by my *I'm Trying So Hard To Forget You*. The gallery rose en masse and applauded her to the echo.

This great singer was thus instrumental in making that ballad of mine a tremendous success, as hundreds of singers throughout the country, hearing that the peerless Mantelli was singing it, wrote to me asking if the song was reserved for her exclusive use. Of course I replied that it was not and that any one might sing it—and many singers did for an entire season. This was another instance of the fact, borne in on me by repeated experience, that the way to popularize a ballad is to have it first sung by a well-known artist, after which all the other singers will eagerly fall in line.

While I was in my office one morning, I heard a wonderful soprano voice coming from one of the adjoining piano rooms. My professional manager informed me that the singer was a woman out of work. She had tried to secure an engagement, but, having no reputation, could not get it. The woman was married to a newspaper reporter, but the couple was having a hard time making both ends meet. I told my manager to have her come up to the same room the next morning at eleven, when I would have Mr. Grau hear her, on condition that she would let

After the Ball

me do all the talking. When Grau came in the next morning he, as usual, picked up a paper and started to read. When the beautiful voice attracted his attention, Grau put his paper down and listened intently. I had purposely left the door ajar, so that he could get the full effect of her voice. When the woman had finished singing, he asked me who she was.

"A friend of mine," said I, "has sent her to me from Australia with a letter, and I intend to place her with a musical show."

"What for?" asked Grau. "Why not turn her over to me and let me handle her? I can get her more money than she can get in a musical show."

"All right," said I, "come in and we will talk it over with her."

I introduced the lady to Mr. Grau, who told her that he was doing the booking for Hammerstein's Roof Garden and could obtain an engagement for her there at a salary of \$350.00 a week.

I said: "Can't you make it \$500.00?"

"\$350.00, or nothing. Take it or leave it."

The needy singer naturally took it, playing at Hammerstein's for the entire season, after which she filled an engagement in opera. Her name was Edith Helena. To this very day she is still singing the song she sang during her entire season at Hammerstein's—Arthur Penn's *The Nightingale*, which I had the good fortune to publish.

Adelina Patti

Another booking agent who enjoyed the privilege of desk-room in my office was William Likens, the very handsome gentleman who for many years managed Lillian Russell.

About this time a new song was making quite a hit. It was entitled *In the Good Old Summertime* and written by George Evans, known as Honey Boy, in collaboration with Ren Shields, and published by Howley, Haviland & Dresser. One day Shields, who was formerly a vaudeville actor and who was then writing lyrics exclusively for Honey Boy Evans, came up to see me to place a song with my house. He said that he had just finished a new one in collaboration with Evans, called *Come Take a Trip in My Airship*, and that Evans was going to sing it throughout his vaudeville engagements. I told him to bring Evans to my office, and the next morning I signed them up for this song. Evans sprang a new idea at this time at one of the vaudeville theatres—the idea of having the entire audience join him in the chorus, which naturally started the song on its road to popularity. He toured the country with the song and orders came in thick and fast. Dear old Ren Shields asked me one day how the song was selling, and I told him pretty fair, intending to surprise him with quite a large royalty check in a few months' time.

He said: "I hope I shall get more out of it than I did in the case of another of my songs."

After the Ball

I told him I was surprised to hear that, as the latter had been one of America's biggest hits.

He said: "I got fifty dollars advance royalty and at royalty time I got a statement for 500,000 copies."

"Well, that was pretty good," said I. "What did you do with the money?"

"I did not get the money; all I got was the statement. My publisher busted and could not pay the royalty. I hope this time everything will be all right."

I laughed and told him that I hoped so, too, for his sake. When July came, which was the regular royalty month, the royalty on *Come Take a Trip in My Airship* amounted to \$6200, to be divided equally between Evans and Shields. I made out the check and when Shields came in said: "Ren, I am sorry, it could have been larger, but times are hard now and people are not buying music, so all you get is thirty-one dollars.

"Well, that is better than nothing," said he, putting the check in his pocket, still under the impression that it was for thirty-one dollars.

Shields immediately walked over to the Corn Exchange Bank and handed the check to the paying teller, and, as he was always kidding, told the teller he would take it in pennies.

The teller looked at the check and then at Ren and smilingly said to him: "My boy, you will have to get an express wagon if you are going to take the

Adelina Patti

amount of this check in pennies. I advise you to take it in bills."

Ren, thinking he was joshing him, said: "All right, give it to me in ones and fives." When the teller started to pile up \$3100 in bills Ren's eyes almost popped out of his head. "Haven't you made a mistake?" Ren gasped.

"We never make mistakes," the teller replied.

Ren grabbed the bills, hurriedly stuffed them into every pocket he had, and then made a bee line for his home, never stopping once on the way, fearful that he might be held up or touched by his legion of professional friends. It was with tears in his eyes that he came to see me next day, bringing me a box of cigars as a little token of appreciation. Then he told me the incident at the bank. It was more money than he had ever seen before in one lump in all his life.

I had frequently noticed a sad-eyed young chap hanging around our offices to see my professional manager. I called the latter's attention to him one day and asked who he was.

"He writes lyrics," said the manager. "He is working in a cabaret downtown and thinks he is a regular song writer."

"Bring him into my office the next time he comes, as I want to talk with him. He sort of interests me."

After the Ball

I looked over the young chap's songs, which were mostly comedy lyrics, and thought them very good. I told him to tie himself up with some music writer and, when he had a song ready—both words and music—to bring it up and I would be pleased to look it over. He thanked me and left. Why—Oh, why?—did not a little bird whisper to me to sign up that boy for a term of years or for the term of his life? You can imagine my surprise when *Alexander's Rag-time Band* burst like a rocket and blazed a path around the country, it being a new style of song that quickly caught the public's fancy. This boy was Irving Berlin. It was then that the firm of Waterson, Berlin & Snyder was formed, and so remained up to a few years ago, when Irving Berlin withdrew and started his own publishing house under the name of Irving Berlin, Inc., with Saul Bornstein as general manager.

A great many unknown geniuses whose names have since become famous have passed through my office in the days gone by.

Another young fellow entered my office one day, with a song that he had written, entitled, *What Am I Going to Do to Make You Love Me?* He said he would like to get \$100.00 for the song outright. I offered him \$50.00 and said I would accept the song under one condition; that I could use it as an interpolated number in a musical show, the music of

Adelina Patti

which I was then publishing. He said I could go as far as I liked, as long as he got the money. That song was interpolated in "The Jolly Bachelors" and became the song hit of the show. This young man was Joe McCarthy, who, with Harry Tierney, wrote the words and music for "Irene," one of the most successful musical comedies of recent times.

One day, while located on 31st Street, a small fellow dashed into my private office with a manuscript in his hand, planked it down on my desk, and exclaimed: "Mr. Harris, I am handing you a big song-hit. Have a pianist play it over, and I will sing it for you. Don't pass it up, because, if you do, other publishers will grab it immediately. Don't lose this great opportunity."

Being always ready and willing to listen to a new song manuscript, I decided to hear this "big hit." The song, which this young fellow sang at the top of his voice, was *Make Yourself at Home*. The title sounded good, the song sounded good, and the young man who wrote it sounded good, too. It was young Pat Rooney. I published the song and tried hard to make it a hit, but there was something lacking in it, and the song flopped. However, Pat has done much better work since. He is still in the game and both he and Mrs. Rooney—Marion Bent—are producing some of the biggest musical vaudeville acts in America.

After the Ball

Early one morning, two girls between the ages of seventeen and eighteen came into my office with several manuscripts. I knew immediately what I was in for—that I would be compelled to listen to their amateur efforts. The girls came from a small town and had gone the round of the publishers, but none of their songs had been accepted. On my asking them to let me hear their youthful compositions, one of them played and the other sang. Four of the numbers proved to be absolutely worthless, and I was just about to leave, when the singer said they had one more they would like me to hear. I sat down with a sigh and listened. She had no sooner struck the first line of the chorus than I knew the song was a winner. It was entitled *It's a Long, Long Time Since I've Been Home*. It was a real novelty song, written in syncopated time. It dealt with the country, the farmer, his cows, and his chickens.

I immediately drew up a contract and made arrangements for its publication, and the girls left my office very happy. A few hours later two of my vaudeville friends came in looking for new songs. They were the well-known team of Gus Van and Joe Schenck, and had been engaged to play on the Century Roof under the management of Ziegfeld and Dillingham. I asked them to try this song and see what they thought of it. They played and sung it and were immediately taken with it. They told me to hold it for them, as they would make it their main

Adelina Patti

song in the new show. That song proved an instantaneous hit.

Newspaper men, too, very frequently try their hand at writing lyrics. A young man came to my office one day with a song he had written. It was Bide Dudley, who was conducting a widely read column in a New York daily newspaper. I asked Mr. Dudley if he wrote both words and music. He said he wrote only the lyrics, the music being written by Gaston O. Wilkins. The particular song he handed me was entitled, *I'll Never Hear You Sing Again Comin' Through the Rye*.

"You want this published?" I asked.

"Yes," said Dudley.

"You write other poems too, don't you?"

"Yes," said he.

"I have read some of them in your column. You call them 'Foolishments.'"

"Yes," said he, looking at me suspiciously.

"All right," said I, "here is your contract."

After he had gone, I turned to my manager and said: "I am going to save a first-class man for the newspaper world. It would be too bad to lose him."

"How is that?" he asked.

"By publishing Mr. Dudley's song."

Bide Dudley is now one of the best theatrical reviewers in this city, and he surely ought to thank me for it, even if I say it myself.

After the Ball

Another newspaper writer of fame, who runs a very witty column in the *Morning World*, is Mr. Franklyn P. Adams, commonly called F. P. A. He has also tried his hand at writing lyrics, turning out some mighty good ones at that. Adams collaborated with O. Henry on his musical comedy book "Lo," for which he wrote all the lyrics. Perhaps it was for the best that the show never went over, as otherwise we might have lost another excellent newspaper man.

Still another splendid writer on this same paper, one of the ablest film reviewers in fact, also caught the lyric-writing fever. He sent me a crackerjack lyric, asking me to put it to music. He is Mr. Don Allen.

A newspaper man who hails from Indiana and who has made a big reputation with his humorous articles, is the celebrated George Ade. I have had the good fortune to publish one of Mr. Ade's songs, *The Magazine Girl*, from the play called "Just Out of College," written by the late Stanley Murphy and Frank P. Callahan.

Another newspaper writer of national reputation, who, by the way, hails from my home town, Milwaukee, was William F. Kirk, who is still writing "Bobbie and His Pa" for the *New York American*. His poems are all gems, and some of them have become world famous. I recall one of them in particular, which struck my fancy and which dealt with

Adelina Patti

the sinking of the *Titanic*. I was so much interested in this lyric that I set it to music, only to find, on singing it over, that it was too sad ever to become popular. I bought Mr. Kirk's poem outright, however, and I regard it today as one of my most valued possessions.

This incident brought to my mind an old resolution of mine: never to write a song about any calamity, since no song of that character has ever made a hit.

CHAPTER XI

Musical Comedies

*I Sign up Weber and Fields—"Higgledy-Piggledy"
& "Twiddle-Twaddle"—Victor Herbert—
Publishing Rights for Fields' Musical Extra-
vaganza, the "Midnight Sons"—Lew's other
Successes—Dressler Scores a Hit with My
"Heaven Will Protect the Working Girl."*

IT was my ambition at this time to make such arrangements with some big producers of musical comedies as would enable me to branch out on a larger scale. Weber and Fields were then the leading comedians, owning their own theater, with a star cast. I thought that perhaps I might get a contract to publish all the music in their several productions. I called to see them at their offices, located in their well-known theater,—the Weber and Fields Music Hall, and the two partners received me cordially. I came to the point at once. Saying that their contract with their last publisher had expired and that they had not as yet renewed it, the famous comedians asked me what I had to offer. I sat down and wrote out a check in four figures, promising them a similar check the first day of every year for the next

Musical Comedies

three years. In a few moments the contract was drawn up and signed. The next day my manager met Joe Weber at the Gilsey House, where they had lunch. "Meyer," said Joe, "I suppose you have heard that I have signed with your boss for three years. He may come from Milwaukee, but he is some fast worker and I hope he makes good. I think he will make the New York publishers sit up and take notice."

The first show music of Weber and Fields that I published was *Twiddle-Twaddle*, music by Maurice Levi and lyrics by Edgar Smith. The boys were splendid, giving me all the leeway possible. I was permitted to attend all rehearsals so that I could pick out what I thought would be the hits of the show and prepare them in advance. The shows were big successes.

My one ambition was to sign up Victor Herbert for just one show. His name on my catalogue would mean a great deal to me.

"Just have a little patience, C. K.; you can never tell what may happen," said Joe Weber.

When the second show was about to close, Joe sent for me.

"Charlie," said he, "my next show is going to be of a higher order than that we have been doing lately. The dialogue and lyrics will be written by Edgar Smith and the music by Victor Herbert. It is going to be called 'Dream City and the Magic Night.'

After the Ball

The cast consists of myself, Otis Harlan, William T. Hodge, Maurice Farkoa, W. L. Romaine, Lores Grimm, Major Johnson, W. D. Stevenson, Ernest Wood, W. J. McCormack, Will Lodella, David Abrams, Cecilia Loftus, Madelyn Marshall, Cora Tracy, Billy Norton, Lois Ewell, Lillian DeLee, Ella Tata, Lillian Blauvelt, and Frank Belcher. The musical director will be Louis B. Gottschalk with Al Holbrook as stage director."

I stood looking at him and gasped: "You don't mean to say, Joe, that Victor Herbert is going to write the music!"

"Sure!" said he. "Why not?"

"But where do I get off?"

"Why, you're to publish the music."

"But I understand that he is under contract with another publisher, and has been for several years. In fact, he is a silent partner of the concern."

"That makes no difference to me, C. K.; you publish the music. So that settles that." And it did.

This was my first meeting with the celebrated composer, Victor Herbert. What a pleasure it was to work with such an artist! His scores were sent over to my office intact. All he wished to see was the printer's proofs. No other arranger or musician ever touched his manuscripts, and everything went like clockwork. I spread myself on the title page as well as over the vocal score. Herbert was thoroughly surprised when the opening night came and



Victor Herbert

Musical Comedies

the music as well as the score was ready for the market. I shall never forget the pleased look on his face when I handed him the first vocal score of "Dream City and the Magic Night." He must have been pleased with my work, as well as with my royalty statements, for he sent me his next score to publish. This was *Algeria*, which many musicians consider one of his best scores. I later published also *Little Nemo*, book by Harry B. Smith and score by Victor Herbert.

A short time after I had signed the contract with Weber and Fields there came a rift in the lute of the two partners, and it was rumored that they were going to separate. I can assure you it was a sad time for me. They intended to produce their own shows individually. In spite of this, my contract held good with Joe Weber.

Before his next show was produced Joe sent for me and said: "C. K., I've a big surprise for you. I intend to produce a show in conjunction with Flo Ziegfeld, who will bring Anna Held into it. The book and lyrics will be by Edgar Smith and the music by Maurice Levi, and it will be a cracker-jack." The show was "Higgledy-Piggledy." It surely was a hit.

I shall never forget an incident which occurred during rehearsals and which amused me greatly. I noticed that several song pluggers were hanging around in hopes that Anna Held or some of the other

After the Ball

singers would interpolate one of their songs in the show. As there was a clause in my contract which prohibited interpolation, this did not worry me at all. Joe told Ziegfeld that there was no use to listen to any new songs, as all the music was to be written by Mr. Levi.

Ziegfeld said: "Suppose we come across a big song-hit, outside of Levi's songs, why not slip it in, as it may make the show?"

"Can't do it," said Joe. "I have a contract with Harris that no interpolations can be put in the show without his consent, or a forfeit of \$1,000 must be paid to him for each interpolated number."

Ziegfeld approached me and took me to his automobile standing at the side entrance. We sat down in the car and he handed me a cigar. We sat there for over an hour, while he argued with me on the question of interpolations. I told him I was perfectly satisfied to live up to my contract and that he had to live up to his. If an interpolation was going in, I was to publish it, under the regular royalty agreement. If not, I was to receive \$1,000 for every song so interpolated. Flo Ziegfeld was after me during the entire three weeks of rehearsals, but the show opened without an interpolation. In spite of our little disagreement, Mr. Ziegfeld and I remained good friends, and I published several of his "Follies" the following years.

At the same time Lew Fields was not idle, for he

Musical Comedies

started in to produce on a very large scale. His first big musical extravaganza was named the "Midnight Sons" and was put on at the Broadway Theater. He also granted me the publishing rights. Talk about spending money! Some of the sets must have cost Lew a fortune. One of these that I remember was a complete replica of Fleischman's Baths. It was never used. This and many other big sets were thrown into the discard.

Among those in the cast of Fields' musical show, were Blanche Ring, Lotta Faust, Vernon Castle, George Monroe, Melville Ellis, the pianist, and a host of other big stars. Ellis had just returned from abroad and had brought with him the manuscript of a new song, which he was using in his pianologue in the show opening in Hartford, Connecticut.

Being very much taken with the song, I asked Ellis who published it. He said that it had not yet been published, but that he had secured the manuscript from Francis, Day, and Hunter, London, England. I asked him if he thought I could buy the song from them, as it had the earmarks of a big song-hit. He told me to call up Max Dreyfus, of the T. B. Harms Company, New York City, who were their American agents. The next morning I called up Mr. Dreyfus, who wanted to know what my offer was. I told him \$1,000 advance and the regular royalty. He said he would cable the offer to London. Two days later I heard from Dreyfus to the effect that the

After the Ball

firm in question never sold any of its songs. It was the well-known hit, *Rings On My Fingers and Bells On My Toes*, and Mr. Ellis had given it to Blanche Ring to sing. I certainly regretted that I had been unable to secure its publishing rights, as this song decidedly affected my sales for the other songs in the show. This shows what an interpolated song does to the publisher, as well as to the writers of the show, who are always the losers. Under such circumstances, one can hardly blame the publishers for objecting so strenuously to the introduction of interpolated numbers.

After the "Midnight Sons" had its run, Lew Fields followed it with "The Jolly Bachelors," "The Henpecks," and "The Never Homes," all of which were successful and created a fine impression on Broadway, both by the music and by stars appearing in them.

I was placed in a rather embarrassing position at this time between those very dear friends of mine, Joe Weber and Lew Fields, owing to the fact that I held the publishing rights for both. One night I would take in part of Joe Weber's show, when Joe would ask me how his ex-partner was doing up at the Broadway, and I would say, "Wonderfully well." Joe would laugh and say: "Stop your kidding, C. K. They tell me that last night the house was only half full."

Musical Comedies

Then I would go over to see Lew Fields and he would ask: "How is Joe Weber doing?"

"Splendidly, Lew," I'd say; "big business."

Lew would laugh and say: "Don't try to fool me, C. K.; I'm an old showman. I hear that Joe is papering the house."

Nevertheless, I knew that they were wishing each other the best of luck; but it was a very peculiar situation to be placed in.

Lew strenuously objected to having any of his songs sung in vaudeville, as he intended making a tour of the country and wished to keep them restricted to the show. One of the numbers, written by A. Baldwin Sloane, was called *Toddling the Todalo*, and was one of the big song-hits of the show. Naturally, every vaudeville singer who could sing ragtime was anxious to secure this song. Hence I received hundreds of requests from my professional friends, who were introducing my popular numbers, for the right to sing this song. As the performing rights belonged exclusively to the producer, I was compelled to turn them all down. Nevertheless, Clarice Vance, who in her coon songs was a great favorite in vaudeville, secured a copy of *Toddling the Todalo* at a music store and placed it in her act. A friend of Fields heard her sing it, and immediately notified him. Lew called on me and told me that I must give him protection and write Miss

After the Ball

Vance to take off the song immediately. I wrote her explaining the situation. She was very much disappointed, but obliged me by taking off the song.

Another controversy in connection with one of the Fields shows arose over his last production, "The Never Homes." The lyrics for this show were written by E. Ray Goetz, now a well-known manager and producer, and husband of Irene Bordoni, in conjunction with A. Baldwin Sloane, who composed the musical score. I signed a contract for the publication rights. When that was settled I took a trip to Europe. On my return I learned that "The Never Homes" was to open the following night. I attended the opening performance, which was a big success, one song especially, *There Is a Girl In Havana*, catching my fancy. Usually at every opening performance all the published numbers are sold in the lobby. Sauntering out to the lobby for a smoke after the first act, I noticed two separate tables displaying copies of the songs, and wondered why. One table held all my publications, and the other just one number, *There Is a Girl In Havana*, which the boy told me was selling very big, and looked like the song-hit of the show. This, naturally, made me feel very elated. Imagine my surprise when, on looking at the copy, I found that this number was published by Waterson, Berlin, and

Musical Comedies

Snyder, the boy telling me that he had secured the copies from that firm. He said he was sorry I was not publishing it. It bore the name of E. Ray Goetz and A. Baldwin Sloane, the composer of the show, with whom I had a contract for the complete score, words and music of *The Never Homes*.

The next morning I telephoned the firm of Waterson, Berlin, and Snyder, asking them by what right they had published that number, informing them of my contract. Mr. Waterson said that the song was an interpolated number, which had been written by a member of his firm, a year or so before the production of the show, and the lyrics by E. Ray Goetz, but that, in deference to Mr. Sloane, who wrote the music for the show, they had placed his name upon the song. I told him my contract was for all songs written under the name of Goetz and Sloane. I was willing to split the royalty with the other publishers, but they would not consent. I therefore started suit, and the judge handed down a verdict in my favor.

Another show which I had published was called "Tillie's Nightmare," music by A. Baldwin Sloane, book and lyrics by Robert B. Smith. This opened at the Herald Square Theatre and afforded Marie Dressler her first big starring part. Miss Dressler was very anxious to know what songs were allotted to her and, hearing that I was the publisher, asked me if there was a good song for her.

After the Ball

"Yes," I said, "there is a very fine, high-class ballad.

"Good Heavens," said Miss Dressler, "I'm not a ballad singer. Imagine me, C. K., with my form and figure, trying to shove on a mushy ballad about some lovesick girl. Why, they'd hiss me off the stage."

"Don't worry, Miss Dressler," said I, "this song is a mock ballad; the title alone is a scream, though it must be sung in a serious vein and you must cry every line of it. It is entitled *Heaven Will Protect the Working Girl*."

The opening night of the show the song was a genuine riot and the song is a catchline to this very day.

CHAPTER XII

Oscar Hammerstein

*I Publish Hammerstein's Musical Production—
Oscar's Ambition and Achievements—Some
Amusing Incidents in Which He Was In-
volved—His Greatness.*

IN 1904 Oscar Hammerstein was writing his own operettas. I wanted to sign him up to publish all his compositions. The first operetta was called Oscar Hammerstein's Musical Production, which he intended for Paradise Garden in the old Victoria Theater. Among the numbers he wrote for this production, both words and music, were the songs entitled *When You Said Yes; Bridgetta; Leap Year in Midnight Town; Fireman's March Song; Lizzie O'Conner, the Great Prima Donna*, and the *Squirrel in the Tree*. The contracts were signed for the show, which proved very successful. Hammerstein was much pleased with the manner in which I published his music, as I had the orchestrations made and played in all the restaurants and cafés in the city at the time. Whenever any of the musicians saw Hammerstein enter a café or restaurant they would hurriedly pick out the orchestration of his melodies and play them.

After the Ball

Hammerstein was ambitious even then to write the score for a grand opera; and, as far as that goes, he was willing to write the book as well as the lyrics, for nothing ever daunted him—nothing was too great or too hard for him to attempt. Being one of the habitués at Paradise Garden, where a corner table was always reserved for Mr. Hammerstein and his friends, I would invariably find Oscar there. It was a pleasure to me to hear him talk.

"Some day," he was wont to say, "I will show them how to run grand opera, with new singing stars, new costumes, and new theaters." We all thought he was dreaming, as usual, but nearly all his dreams came true. He not only built an opera house in New York, the Manhattan, but one in London as well. Even though he lost money, he gave the public some of the most wonderful performances ever given in this city and brought to the front America's greatest singing stars, to say nothing of European stars he had given their first hearing in this country. Oscar Hammerstein was fifty years ahead of his time.

Henry Troy was a young colored singer, who had just left the Ernest Hogan show. He had a pleasing high tenor voice and could render a ballad better than any other colored man I ever heard. In Hogan's show Troy had sung a ballad, *Just One Word of Consolation*. He came to see me and said he was very anxious to secure an engagement on Broadway. I told him I would tackle Hammerstein and see if

Oscar Hammerstein

he could not place him on the roof for a week. I did tackle Oscar, who looked at me for a moment and said: "Harris, you must be going *mshugga* (crazy)." I told him not at all, and predicted that the young singer would prove a sensation. Every night, for one week, I kept harping on this subject, until at last Oscar said: "To cure you, once and for all, and to show you that you are not a prophet, I will let this boy go on for one night."

Troy opened the following Monday and sang two numbers. After his rendition of the third number, *Just One Word of Consolation*, the applause was deafening. Mr. Hammerstein, big-hearted man that he was, also applauded him to the echo. He was astonished at the success of this colored boy and kept him on the roof for the entire summer season, at the end of which Troy returned to Hogan's show.

Another amusing incident in which Mr. Hammerstein was involved also occurred at that time. My brother Joe had sent a friend of his from Chicago to see me regarding his fiancée, who was then completing in Germany her musical studies for the operatic stage. This gentleman said he would like to meet Mr. Hammerstein. So I introduced him to Oscar, whom he begged as a personal favor to look up his fiancée, who was going to sing in several concerts, when he went to Europe to engage stars for his coming operatic venture at the Manhattan Opera House. Mr. Hammerstein promised to do it. On his return,

After the Ball

several months later, I met Oscar, sitting as usual at his little corner table on the roof. When I had greeted him, he said to me: "I heard that young lady sing at a concert in Berlin."

"How was she?" I asked.

"Wonderful," he said, "but wait until you see her."

"Why, what is the matter with her?" I asked.

"She will be home in two weeks. When you have seen her, call me up."

That was all I could get out of him at the time. Two weeks later the gentleman from Chicago arrived in great excitement, as his fiancée was to come home the next morning. He said he would bring her to my office immediately, so that I could hear her sing.

On returning from lunch the following day, I was startled by a voice emanating from one of my piano rooms. All of my employees had congregated in the hall and were intently listening to the singing,—a thing they very rarely did, hearing so much of it from morning until late at night.

"Who is she?" I asked. They said they did not know. I entered the room and saw my brother's friend, with a broad smile on his face. His fiancée, the prima donna, was sitting on the piano stool, playing her own accompaniment. He introduced me to her, and I almost fainted, for she was the fattest woman I had ever seen outside of a dime museum or

Oscar Hammerstein

Barnum's Circus. The lady sang several songs for me, and I was really surprised at the beauty of her voice, which was highly cultivated and very well trained, sounding as clear as a bell; but, oh, what a figure! I could not blame Hammerstein for not engaging her.

Her fiancé said he would leave her with me for a while, as he had to attend to her baggage. In conversation with that lady I told her that, as the young man loved her and as she, no doubt, wanted to marry him, she had better give up all thought of an operatic career, which was so taxing of time and energy as to preclude all possibility of regular home- and family-life. She assured me that she ardently loved the man, who for ten long years had paid all her tuition abroad and waited patiently to marry her. To her credit be it said, the singer agreed with me and left with her fiancé for Chicago. I heard afterwards that they were married.

One more incident connected with genial Mr. Hammerstein comes to my mind. During my Milwaukee days Mrs. Stacy Williams, a well-known vocal teacher, was located above my studio. Among her pupils was a very beautiful woman with a wonderful coloratura voice. Her name was Alys Lorraine. Mrs. Williams brought her down to my studio one day, so that I could hear her sing and, perchance, get for her an engagement. I secured an engagement for her at the Palm Garden, in Mil-

After the Ball

waukee, and a short time afterwards she sailed for Europe to complete her musical education.

Every year for the next five years I received a card from Miss Lorraine, telling me how she was getting along, where she was singing, and of her ambition to become an operatic star. While on a trip to Europe, several years later, I met Oscar Hammerstein in Paris, who told me he intended to open his London Opera House and, as usual, was looking for talent. He said he had heard of an American singer who was making a success at the Paris Opera House, and asked me to be his guest that night to hear her sing. I said I would be delighted to accompany him.

The opera happened to be *Thaïs* and the star, to my great surprise, Miss Alys Lorraine. She certainly must have studied very hard, I thought, to overcome the many obstacles to singing in that celebrated opera house.

"That is she. What do you think of her?" asked Mr. Hammerstein."

I did not tell him at the time that I knew her. After the performance Mr. Hammerstein met the manager, an excitable little Frenchman, who escorted us back of the stage, to the Greenroom, where he had sent word to Miss Lorraine that Oscar Hammerstein, the impresario, wished to see her. We waited but a moment and Miss Lorraine, accompanied by her French maid, entered, her arms

Oscar Hammerstein

filled with the flowers she had received that evening. She cordially greeted Mr. Hammerstein, who then introduced me to her. The precious flowers all dropped to the floor as the prima donna, with a cry of joy, threw her arms around me and kissed me, to the great surprise of Oscar and her manager.

"Charlie Harris," she cried, "what are you doing here and why did you not let me know you were coming?" was all she could say.

We all repaired to a café and Oscar stated the nature of his business. Miss Lorraine said she was very sorry, but she had just signed a contract for five years, and doubted whether she would ever sing in America. Nothing could persuade her to change her mind then, nor ever since.

Dear old Oscar Hammerstein, as great a genius as this country has ever known. He was my friend through thick and thin, and I doubt if we shall ever see his like again. His son, William Hammerstein, who was for many years manager of Hammerstein's Music Hall—situated beneath the Paradise Garden—often said to me: "If my father had only taken my advice and kept his hands off grand opera, he would have been a very rich man." There was no doubt of that. But Oscar, bless his soul, would never take advice from anyone; thus he lived and thus he died.

CHAPTER XIII

Writing Scenarios

How It Started—David Belasco—History Repeats Itself—"When It Strikes Home" Scores a Hit—The Fate of My Other Scenarios—I Write an Original Story for Lew Fields, with Whom I Then Collaborate on "What Children Will Do."

IN 1910 the first motion-picture exposition was held at the Grand Central Palace. All the well-known motion-picture producers engaged booths where leading stars and entire companies were on exhibition. Naturally, the people flocked there to see them.

•Harry Reichenbach, who, by the way, had been around the world several times, was at that time publicity man for the Famous Players and had charge of their booth. He asked me to come and see him. I took in the show, which was very interesting, as there were stars from the Kalem, Lubin, Biograph, Vitagraph, Essanay, Universal and Jesse L. Lasky Famous Players Companies. Harry escorted me from booth to booth, introducing me to the various motion-picture stars, which included

Writing Scenarios

Earl Williams, Kathlyn Williams, Mary Pickford, and others. On returning to Harry's booth, he introduced me to a ministerial-looking gentleman with iron-gray hair.

Harry said: "Mr. Belasco, I want you to meet a friend of mine, the gentleman who wrote *After the Ball*."

Mr. Belasco shook hands with me cordially, and said: "I certainly am glad to meet the man who wrote that charming song. How it thrilled me when I first heard May Irwin sing it. Do you know, it would make a beautiful photo play. Why don't you try to write a scenario around it?"

On returning home that night I decided to take Belasco's advice and write a scenario, which I did. Then my troubles began. I called up Dan Frohman, who was then producing pictures, and made an appointment with him. I met him at his office above the Lyceum Theater and explained what I was after—that is, that I desired to sell the scenario.

"All right, Mr. Harris," said Frohman, "read it to me."

When I had done so, he said: "The story is very well written and has some very good points; but you have a scene there of a den of crooks, and I doubt whether the public will stand for anything like that in pictures."

"But, my dear Mr. Frohman," said I, "if you show goodness, you should show also a contrast; if

After the Ball

you show love, you should show the opposite. Otherwise you have no story."

"That is all right," said Mr. Frohman; "in a play you can take liberties, but you can't in a picture."

Therefore the deal fell through.

I sent the scenario to the Universal Company, and it came back with a polite note saying it would not do for pictures. It went the rounds of all the other companies, but all to no avail; back it came every time. History was repeating itself.

One afternoon a few months later Pierce Kingsley, who was connected with the William B. Steiner Photoplay Company, and who was directing pictures at the time, came to see me and said he was looking for a story that would fit Herbert Kelcey and Effie Shannon. His company had placed them under contract for a picture at a very large salary. I sprung *After the Ball* on him, and he said he would show it to Mr. Steiner and give me an answer within a few days.

The next morning he came up very much excited and said: "Steiner likes the story very much."

We immediately signed a contract for the picture. When the picture was on the market I decided to use my other song-hits and turn them into scenarios. I tackled *Always in the Way*, which was made into a five-reel photo play by the Dyreda Picture Company, featuring Mary Miles Minter, and it went

Writing Scenarios

over with a bang. I followed it with a new song I had just written, entitled *When It Strikes Home*. I submitted the scenario to Lewis J. Selznick, at that time president of the World's Film Corporation, who, after reading it, said it was not strong enough for pictures. I thought otherwise and told him so.

He said: "Well, if you feel that way, why don't you make it yourself?"

"I will," said I.

No doubt Mr. Selznick thought I was joking, but it was no laughing matter with me at the time. I was in dead earnest, as I had confidence in that song story and felt it would make a good photo play.

"Suppose I do make it and finance it," said I, "what arrangements can I make with you for distributing it?"

"When the picture is completed," said Selznick, "and if I like it, I will pay you the money you have expended on it, besides your price for the story; and after the picture has been released and money received, we will split fifty-fifty." This was done.

B. S. Moss, the vaudeville theater owner, who was also making pictures at that time, had just finished making Elinor Glyn's "Three Weeks." He had an office in the building where I was located. I called on him and asked him who had made his picture. He told me the Kinemacolor Company, which had an open-air studio at Whitestone, Long Island. He

After the Ball

said they were very fine people to deal with, especially the president, Mr. Barnard. He advised me to go and see him, which I did.

Mr. Barnard said: "Young man, you are entering into a dangerous game, and I don't like to take your money before giving you full information regarding the great risk you are taking in making motion pictures. Once you start at it, you have got to finish. If you get cold feet and stop in the middle, all the money you have expended is lost. There is no turning back. Furthermore, you must have a good story, full of punches and heart interest, and a good title."

I listened to him and then asked him if he would give me a little time and listen to my story. I read to him "When It Strikes Home." He told me that he considered it a splendid story and that he would be pleased to make the picture.

I was introduced to his director, Mr. Perry N. Vekroff, to whom I handed the story and who wrote the continuity. In the cast were Grace Washburn, Edwin August, and Muriel Ostrich. In four weeks the picture was finished.

At this time a picture was being made at the Whitestone studio by the Kinemacolor Company for the Shuberts, and was being supervised by Edward Davidow, their brother-in-law. Mr. Barnard asked him to come into the screen room and see a

Writing Scenarios

picture they had just finished, entitled "When It Strikes Home." Mr. Davidow was so impressed with it that he told Lee Shubert about it.

Mr. Shubert said: "If it is as good as you say, why not book it for a week's run at the New York Hippodrome?"—then under the Shubert management.

I was very much surprised to receive a telephone call from the house manager of the Hippodrome asking me to furnish him with stills—photos of the characters of the pictures—as well as some of the scenes. I asked him whether he had not made a mistake. He said he had not, the Shuberts having told him the photo play was "When It Strikes Home," by Charles K. Harris. I informed him that he would have to call on Mr. Selznick, of the World's Film Company, as they were the distributors of this picture.

A half hour later I received another telephone call, this time from Mr. Selznick, who said: "Harris, see what I have done for you! I have booked your picture at the Hippodrome at a very good figure."

"But, my dear Selznick," said I, "you have not even seen the picture."

"That's all right," he said; "bring over your bills and I will give you a check."

I did, and, true to his word, he gave me a check in

After the Ball

full for the amount I had laid out, as well as the price for my story.

The picture opened at the Hippodrome and was the sensation of the bill; in fact, Mr. Selznick told me it was the best picture they had at that time. It held the record until they made "Trilby," with Clara Kimball Young.

A few months later I informed Selznick that I intended making another picture, called "School Bells."

He said: "Go to it; I will make the same agreement."

The artists whom I engaged to play in this picture were Arthur Donaldson, Beulah Poynter, Ethelmary Oakland, the child artist, and Frank Longacre, boy actor.

Selznick thought the story too strong for the title. I therefore changed it to "Hearts of Men," which turned out to be a very big success.

I next looked through my list of song titles and, selecting *For Sale a Baby*, wrote a scenario around it. Mr. Harry Reichenbach, today one of the best known publicity men in America, was kind enough to look at my picture and to suggest that I call it, "Should a Baby Die," owing to the controversy raging in Chicago at the time over the question whether crippled and sick children should be chloroformed or allowed to live,—which happened to be the subject of my story. Changing the title, I sold the pic-

Writing Scenarios

ture to the Hanover Picture Company of Boston, who, I was told, made a great deal of money out of it.

Owing to the fact that the writing of scenarios and the producing and financing of the pictures was too much for one man to attend to, I then decided to stop producing, simply writing scenarios and songs as heretofore and attending to my publishing business.

One afternoon at the Astor Hotel I ran across Lew Fields, who told me he had just signed a contract to star in a picture for Mr. William N. Selig, of the Kline, Edison, Selig, Essanay Co. The picture was to be directed by J. H. Richmond. Lew said he had read over twenty stories, but could find none to suit him. I told him I would write one for him.

I thereupon wrote an original story, entitled "The Barker," dealing with the barker of a circus, Lew to be cast as the hero. This was a story with thrills and punches and was immediately accepted by Fields. It was produced and distributed by the Essanay, Selig and Vitagraph Co.

This story going over so well, I fell back on my old song titles and wrote a scenario around my soldier song, *Break the News to Mother*, and sold it to B. S. Moss, who, in conjunction with Zittel and with Julius Steeger as director, made the picture.

I then received a commission from Mr. Frank Hall, a new motion picture producer, who was de-

After the Ball

sirous of producing a picture with Lew Fields as star. Lew informed him that if he could get another story as good as "The Barker," he would talk business with him. I met Mr. Hall and introduced him to Miss Adeline Leitzbach, a young lady who was once continuity writer for the William Fox Picture Company, and whom I had asked to join me as collaborator in a story.

Lew said he had a great idea and a good title for the story. He called it, "What Children Will Do." From his title and idea we wrote the story. Mr. Hall accepted it and made the picture. When he sent for me to look at it, I got the surprise of my life, for I found that it was not Lew Fields, but some other actor—an actor entirely unknown to me—who was playing the leading part. I learned that Mr. Hall and Mr. Fields could not get together on the salary question, so Lew gave up the idea of appearing in the picture.

Bobbie North, an actor who had gone into picture production, bought it from the Hall Co. and changed the title to "Ashamed of Parents." Bob told me he made enough money out of it to buy out the Warner Exchanges at that time.

Some months later I received a telephone call from the W. H. Hodkinson Producing Company, of New York, for an original story suitable for Miss Irene Castle. I consulted Miss Leitzbach, and together we wrote "Slim Shoulders," which opened at

Writing Scenarios

the Capitol Theater, New York, and was acclaimed by all critics as one of the best photoplays Miss Castle had ever appeared in. I wrote also a song to fit the title, which was played throughout the picture and contributed a great deal to its success.

On the evening I attended the opening of "Slim Shoulders" at the Capitol Theater there were two young girls seated just in front of me. They had fortified themselves with a box of chocolates and had settled down for a good time.

One of them, looking over the program, remarked that the story was written by the same fellow, Harris, who wrote those mushy love songs.

"You know, Mabel," said she, "they're all about breaking hearts, lovesick girls, and dying mothers."

"Is that the guy?" said the other. "Gee, it must be some bum picture we are going to sit through tonight!"

After the picture had been shown, a gentleman and his wife seated beside the girls proved to be neighbors of mine. The gentleman turned, saw me, and said: "Hello, Harris, allow me to congratulate you. This is the best picture I have seen in a long time."

I saw the girls nudge each other and smile and smile. For the rest of the performance quiet prevailed.

The picture created so much talk among the producers that I received a call from Warner Brothers,

After the Ball

who had signed up John Barrymore, and such well-known playwrights as David Belasco and George M. Cohan for several of their plays.

I sold them three stories, the first taken from a well-known song of mine, *The Tie that Binds*, which had been filmed and distributed. The others were original stories, entitled "Silken Shackles" and "The Bridge of Sighs." None of these three plays was written with a collaborator.

Other scenarios which I wrote around my songs and are now completed, are "Behind the Times," "There'll Come A Time," "For Old Time's Sake," "Hello, Central, Give Me Heaven," "Would You Care?" "'Mid the Green Fields of Virginia," "Somewhere," "Cast Aside," "Fallen By the Wayside," "Was I a Fool?" and "One Night in June."

CHAPTER XIV

Theodore Roosevelt

Compensation for Composers—The President's Support of the Copyright Bill.

WHILE on a visit to Chicago one day during the World's Fair in 1893, wishing to buy records of some of my latest songs, I went to a large phonograph store on State Street. The records were then made of wax and were in circular form, for that was before the advent of the flat record. Thousands were sold daily. I asked the clerk for a record of *Hello, Central, Give Me Heaven* and *Always in the Way*. He laughed and said he would like to buy them himself. He then told me that they were completely sold out of these two numbers.

"Look here," said he, showing me a large photograph of a train of cars, with a banner stretched across the top, reading, "Hello, Central, Give Me Heaven, and Always in the Way. We are on our way South."

I said: "Do you mean to tell me that this is an entire carload of these records?"

"It sure is," said the clerk.

"It is a good thing no royalty is paid to the com-

After the Ball

poser, for that would take quite a sum of money out of the pockets of the phonograph companies, wouldn't it?" I remarked.

"I should say it would," said the clerk; "but that is the composer's lookout, as there is no law to protect his interests." I told him I thought so, too. "Give me your name and address," said he, "and I will send these records to you as soon as we receive them." I handed him my card. "So you are Mr. Harris, the song writer. I want to apologize if I said anything detrimental to the composer."

"Not at all," said I; "you have given me a great idea, for which I thank you."

Later I learned that the Music Publishers' Society of the United States had been agitating the copyright bill for many years, but that up to then nothing had materialized. When I moved to New York I joined this society. Several bills were introduced subsequently, one being called the Kittredge Bill and another the Smoot-Currier Bill. We soon learned that one of these measures was before the combined Senate and House committees for consideration. The society raised funds to send Victor Herbert, John Philip Sousa, and Reginald DeKoven to speak in favor of the bill. They did their best to influence the committee in its favor, but the measure was pigeonholed and stood no show of being passed.

Nevertheless, the society kept pounding away. I received a letter from Mr. James F. Bowers, presi-

Theodore Roosevelt

dent of the society, asking me to run down to Washington and see what had happened to the bill. The society having no funds at the time, I had to dig down and pay my own expenses. This was my first visit to Washington, and I was at a loss as to what was the best course to follow. I happened to run across Rudolph Aronson, one time manager of the Casino Theater, New York. "What are you doing here, Harris?" he asked. "I came down to see what can be done about the Copyright Bill," said I.

Being a musician Aronson immediately became interested in my mission, and when I had finished telling him my troubles he said: "There is only one man to see. If you can get him interested, half the battle is won."

"Who?" said I.

"President Roosevelt, who is an author himself and will appreciate the story you have told me."

"How, in the name of Heaven, am I going to meet the President?" I demanded.

"I'll fix that," said Aronson. "Mr. Cortelyou, who was formerly secretary to the President and was later appointed Postmaster-General, is a very dear friend of mine and will get you an appointment to meet the President tomorrow. Be here in the lobby at eleven o'clock and await a call from me."

You can rest assured I was up bright and early next morning. At eleven sharp there was a telephone call. Aronson told me to be at the White

After the Ball

House at five minutes to twelve, have my name announced, and Mr. Loeb, the President's secretary, would take me to see the President.

When I entered the White House I saw in the entrance hall a large table, surrounded by members of the Associated Press, who looked at me, as if to say: "Who is this guy that has a special appointment with the President?" I handed the attendant my card, and Mr. Loeb came out and greeted me cordially.

His first words were: "I see you are up against it, Harris. When I take you in to the President, talk to him like a Dutch uncle. Don't be afraid; just tell him the facts, and he will listen. Good luck to you."

"How long may I have with him?" said I.

"Well," said he, "perhaps five or six minutes. I guess you can tell him enough in that time."

"I shall try to," said I.

We soon entered a large room, where the President was seated at his desk. He rose when we entered, and Mr. Loeb introduced me.

Before Mr. Loeb turned to go he said: "Mr. President, Ambassador Rosen, of Russia, has just arrived and wishes to see you."

"Show him in," answered the President.

Ambassador Rosen came in and bowed to the President, who asked him to be seated for a few minutes, when he would be at leisure. Then he sat

Theodore Roosevelt

down and, looking me in the eye, said: "Well?"

I assure you, I felt like falling through the floor.

"Mr. President," I began, "I am here on behalf of thousands of song writers regarding the new copyright bill, which I hear has been pigeonholed. I should like to have brought the entire gang with me, but walking is tough," and I could see a twinkle in the President's eyes, but he remained silent. Then I launched into the subject so close to my heart. I explained to him the inroads that the mechanical people were making on the sales of our sheet music, for which we were drawing no royalties.

Suddenly he banged his clenched fist on his desk and demanded in a loud voice: "Do you mean to tell me that you are not receiving any remuneration from the mechanical companies for the works of your brain?"

"Yes, Mr. President," said I; "but you can hardly blame them, as they are within the law. We writers are working under the copyright law of 1701, which has never been changed, and the mechanical record is a device that has sprung up in the meantime and there is no clause in our copyright to cover it."

"Nevertheless," said the President, "it is an injustice to use a writer's works without his being paid for them."

"You are right, Mr. President; and they could use any part of the books you have written and published."

After the Ball

"I should like to see them do it!" said he.

"What is there to prevent them?" I asked. "They take ours, why not yours?"

He looked at me steadily for a moment and then asked: "Who is drawing up this bill?" I gave him all the facts. "You came down here alone, paying your own way?"

"I did," said I.

"Are you a writer?"

"Yes, both writer and publisher, so I can talk for both sides."

"What have you ever written?"

"After the Ball."

"That's enough," said he. "Who is on the committee?" And I gave him the list. "I see," said he. "Senator Smoot is chairman of the senatorial committee and Frank D. Currier of the House committee. I want you to meet these two gentlemen personally and tell them your story the way you told it to me." He stopped suddenly and took up the telephone, saying, "Give me Cortelyou," and when he got a response he said: "I want you to write two letters, one to Senator Smoot and the other to Currier, for Mr. Charles K. Harris. See that they are ready for him, as he will call for them within an hour." Then he turned to me and said: "Now, Harris, go and see Solberg, of the Copyright Office, first, and let him give you some more pointers, as you may

Theodore Roosevelt

need them. When you meet these gentlemen you will then know the full facts in the case." He stood up, shook hands with me, and said: "Mr. Harris, I am with you to the finish. Good luck!"

He touched the button, and Secretary Loeb entered and escorted me out. I really did not know whether I was walking on my head or feet.

As I was leaving, Loeb said: "You must have greatly interested the President. Do you know how long you have been in there?"

"No," said I.

"Exactly forty minutes; that is longer than any one has remained in that room since I have been secretary."

When I passed through Newspaper Row, all the reporters, armed with pads and pencils, surrounded me and commenced plying me with questions from all sides. I told them that whatever passed between the President and myself was strictly confidential. Though they followed me as far as the curb, I gave them no satisfaction whatsoever.

One of the newspaper scribes must have recognized me, however, for when I returned to New York a few days later, all the leading papers were headlining the fact that "Charles K. Harris had been to Washington to interview the President and had told him some astounding facts regarding the inroads the mechanical records were making in the

After the Ball

sheet-music business." They must have known that this was the only thing I could have been to see the President about.

I called on Mr. Solberg, and after I had become thoroughly conversant with the contents of the bill, I returned to Cortelyou's office, where I was immediately admitted. The letters of introduction were handed to me by Mr. Cortelyou personally, who told me that the President was deeply interested in the new copyright bill and that he, too, wished me the best of luck.

CHAPTER XV

The Copyright Bills

Currier and Senator Smoot—Harry Williams Helps a Lot—Bill Finally Passed—Formation of The American Society of Composers, Authors and Publishers—The 1924 Fight for the Bill—The Committee's Personnel—Victor Herbert—The Music Publishers.

FORTIFIED with President Roosevelt's letters of introduction, my next step was to call on Congressman Currier. The clerk at his hotel told me that he would arrive at six o'clock, as he and his family usually had dinner at seven P. M., and that he would point him out to me. At six o'clock the Congressman walked in, arm in arm with Senator Platt, of New York. I introduced myself without showing him the letter from the President, telling him that I wanted to see him for a few moments regarding the new copyright bill. He raised his hand as though to wave me aside, saying, "That will take quite a time before it is brought out. I have already talked with your committee, Messrs. Herbert, Sousa, and DeKoven; so there is no use of our rehashing the matter."

I explained that I had some facts I wanted to

After the Ball

present to him, facts somewhat different from those my colleagues had placed before him.

"Too busy tonight," he replied. "I intend having dinner shortly with Mrs. Currier and have no time to talk with you."

"But the President said you would see me and would listen to what I had to say."

"The President?" said he.

"Yes," said I; "I had almost forgotten my letter."

I handed him the letter, and I never saw a man more surprised than he was when he read its contents.

"Well," said he, "sit right down, Mr. Harris, and we will talk it over." Turning to Senator Platt, he said, "Senator, this is Mr. Charles K. Harris, of New York, who has come to see me about the copyright bill."

The senator acknowledged the introduction, and the three of us sat down at a small table in the center of the room. Currier started at me as though he was cross-examining a witness in court.

"Mr. Harris," he said, "you writers and publishers are making a big mistake in endeavoring to procure a new copyright bill with a mechanical clause in it. You must realize that the phonograph companies are popularizing your songs and creating a big demand for them. Go home, my lad, and let them continue to use your compositions and exploit them. Just sit tight and sell the music. As an ex-

The Copyright Bills

ample, during a visit to my home town in New Hampshire, my daughter, who is quite a musician, and myself visited one of our prominent music stores, where my daughter purchased several popular records for her machine; and, as a point of information, I asked the music dealer whether the sale of records interfered with the sale of sheet music, and was told that it did not. My dear Harris, you have it in a nutshell. So once more I say go home and don't bother your head about any new copyright bill. Take my advice; let well enough alone."

During all this conversation Senator Platt watched me closely to see how I was taking it. There I sat, quietly drinking in Currier's words, and I guess he thought by my demeanor that I was licked; but he had another guess coming, as every word he uttered was fresh ammunition for me. When he had finished, he stood up as though to dismiss the subject.

"Just a moment, Mr. Currier," I said. "I have listened to you, and now will you kindly listen to me?"

He took out his watch and said: "I have not much time, so make it short."

"You said you went into a music store," said I, "with your daughter and she bought several song records."

"Yes," said he smilingly.

"Now, Mr. Currier, tell me honestly—Did your

After the Ball

daughter at the time she bought these records buy any sheet music?"

"Why, no," said he.

"Well, Mr. Currier, that is just the point. You struck the nail on the head when you said that they buy the records, and because they do that, they have no further use for the sheet music. I make my living by writing and publishing songs, and I am not in the record business, nor do I derive any benefit from it. The mechanical people make their money selling records, and they have to wait until a composer writes a song before they can make a record.

"For this you say we get advertising. My dear Mr. Currier, I pay for my advertising in good hard cash, and I do not ask any corporation to advertise for me. My songs advertise themselves. I have them sung by my friends in the singing profession, in every vaudeville theater, minstrel show, and concert hall throughout the country; they are the ones who make my songs popular. Never in the history of the mechanical people can they show one instance where they have made a song a hit through their mechanical department. They wait until the publishers spend small fortunes to popularize their songs, and then help themselves to them without paying one penny tribute."

Senator Platt then broke in and said, almost in the same words as President Roosevelt: "You mean to

The Copyright Bills

say that the mechanical companies are using your songs without paying you anything?"

And once more I was compelled to go through the story that I had told the President.

Senator Platt turned to Mr. Currier and solemnly said: "He has you there, Currier. That boy speaks facts, and you cannot get away from facts. He has right and justice on his side; and, young man, if it ever comes to a vote before the Senate, you can count on me." He then shook me by the hand.

Just at that moment Mrs. Currier entered. I was introduced to her and she turned to her husband saying, "My dear, it's long past our dinner hour."

"By Jove," said Currier, looking at his watch, "it's 7:30!" He then said: "I will see you again, Mr. Harris, as I want to be a little more enlightened on the subject. You told me some things that have never been thoroughly explained to me before."

I met Currier several times after that and found his attitude on the question of copyright very much changed.

My next call was that same night. Learning that Senator Smoot occupied quarters in the Hotel Willard, I sent up my card after dinner, noting on the back of it that I desired to see him regarding the copyright bill. The Senator sent word that he was busy dictating letters and that it was impossible for him to see me just then. I told his secretary that it

After the Ball

was very important, that I had come all the way from New York especially to see the Senator, and that I had a letter to him from the President. I handed him the letter to take up to the Senator. A few moments later the secretary returned and asked me to come up. The Senator was in his shirt sleeves, and his table was covered with correspondence.

"Sit down, Mr. Harris. Glad to see you. Now, what is on your mind?" I started to tell him about the copyright, when he said: "Yes, yes, I heard the same story from the committee that was sent down here by your society. There were several things that came out in the newspapers regarding the senators and this bill that I do not like. I do not know who inspired those articles, but they are false in each and every particular."

I told him I knew nothing of newspaper articles derogatory to any senator or congressman on the copyright committee, and asked him to hear at least my side of the matter.

"I am not keen on listening to any more complaints of the music people," said the Senator.

I could see by his manner that he was hurt by something in connection with the music publishers' organization. What it was I could not tell, nor would he say any more. I saw that I was not making much headway, and, not wishing to antagonize him, thought I would wait until he was in a better frame of mind, when just at that instant there came a

The Copyright Bills

knock on the door and Mrs. Smoot was announced. I was introduced to her.

"Oh," said she, "is this the gentleman who has written all those beautiful songs that our children sing?"

"Yes," said the Senator.

Just by luck, I happened to have a roll of my latest songs, which I had brought along with me to show the Senator.

"May I offer these to you, with my compliments?" said I, handing the roll to her.

Looking at the Senator, she said, "May I accept them?"

"Certainly," said he.

Soon afterwards I left Washington.

I wrote the Senator a few weeks later that I expected to be in Washington on a certain date. He replied, urging me to come direct to his home for dinner, which I did. Those present were the Senator and Mrs. Smoot, the Senator's mother and his three children, a young lady of sixteen and two young sons. After dinner we went into the music room, where I sang a number of my songs, being joined in the chorus by the young folks, and, as the old saying goes, a good time was had by all. From that day on the Senator was my staunch and true friend, as, I'm proud to say, he is to this day. To him, more than to anyone else, belongs the credit for the passing of the copyright bill of 1909. His per-

After the Ball

severance, his fairness to one and all on the committee, his well-timed arguments in its favor, won over the entire committee.

Another hustler during the copyright fight was Harry Williams, a song writer, who wrote *Under the Shade of the Old Apple Tree*. He was a close friend of Senator Kittredge. Harry also had a room at the Hotel Willard, and every night we would meet and check up the senators and congressmen we had called on, hoping they would vote for our bill. Harry, who has since passed to the great beyond, certainly did some glorious work.

Victor Herbert made many a trip to Washington and did a world of entertaining. Almost every night after the theater you could see him at the Hotel Willard, with all the writers that were working down there at the time. We usually feasted, and the trouble was that big-hearted Victor always insisted on paying the bill. I told him that I was willing to join him once in a while, but did not want him always to pay the check.

He slapped me on the back and said: "My dear C. K., we can't take our money with us; so let's have a good time while we are here."

Another young fellow who worked like a Trojan for that bill, more for the love of the thing than for the money that was in it—for there was not much money in the publisher's treasury at that time—was our only attorney. He was pitted against some of

The Copyright Bills

the greatest lawyers the mechanical companies could procure—not one, but a dozen—to fight the bill. This young fellow was Nathan Burkan, today one of New York's most prominent copyright and theatrical attorneys; and ably he did his duty. Many times he went to Washington, digging down into his own pocket to pay his expenses. He was at the time attorney for several of the New York publishers, and therefore was interested in the bill.

I shall never forget the last meeting of the patents committee which we were called upon to attend. On the train going down, among many others, were Daniel Frohman and William A. Brady. They were much interested in the bill, as it contained a clause also against piracy of plays. Mr. Frohman, learning that I had been there for two years working on this same bill, asked to be introduced to me. He sat down with me, and we had a long conversation. I told him that the bill would undoubtedly pass; that I had interviewed several senators and congressmen and had been assured of their votes. Mr. Frohman was delighted to hear the good news. He made a splendid impression before the committee, as did also Mr. Brady.

The bill was passed and went into effect in 1909. It had been a hard-fought battle, but a splendid one, fought honestly and persistently, with President Roosevelt lending his hearty support.

A few months later, after the Copyright Bill had

After the Ball

been passed, I made an appointment with a friend to take dinner with him. About 4:00 o'clock, on the day of our appointment, I received a telephone call, and the voice over the telephone sounded very much like my friend's.

"How do you do?" he said.

"What is the matter, Dave," I replied, "is the appointment off for tonight?"

"Why should it be," said he.

"Well, why did you call me up?" I asked.

"I just wanted to hear your voice again," said he.

"Stop your kidding," said I; "come over to the office, and we will go out to dinner."

"I can't leave my room," said he, "at the present time. I am at the Hotel Imperial. This is Senator Smoot speaking."

Now, I surely thought Dave was kidding me, as he had often heard me speak of the Senator.

"Are you coming over or not?" I demanded.

"See here," said the voice, "come over to Room 24, Hotel Imperial, and I will have a big surprise for you."

"All right," I said.

I went over to the hotel and was shown to Room 24. When the door opened, there stood my friend Senator Smoot, life-size. He had come to New York to witness the launching of the Battleship Utah, and invited me to join him and his family at the ceremony. This was certainly some joke on me.

The Copyright Bills

In 1918 the American Society of Composers, Authors and Publishers was formed for the purpose of collecting music royalties, as provided by Congress under the Copyright Bill of 1909, from all the radio stations, cabarets, dance halls, and theatres where music is played for profit. To many struggling authors, composers, and music publishers this Society has proved of great benefit. No longer can it happen, as has been the case heretofore, that a song writer must be buried by charity. Many publishers, as well as writers, have been kept going by this Society.

Its officers now serving without pay are: President, Gene Buck; First Vice-President, John Philip Sousa; Second Vice-President, Louis Bernstein; Treasurer, Raymond Hubbell; Assistant Treasurer, J. Witmark; Secretary, Charles K. Harris. The administrative Committee comprises J. C. Rosenthal, General Manager, E. C. Mills, and Silvio Hein. The Board of Governors consists of twenty-four members, divided equally between the publishers, authors, and composers (both classical and popular), all having an equal say in the Board. Nathan Burkan is attorney for the Society, which was modeled after the French Society, so successfully collecting royalties for composers of that country for the past fifty years.

In 1924 the music publishers were again called

After the Ball

upon to protect their rights in the copyright bill of 1909. It was attacked by both the motion-picture companies and the radio corporations, which wished to eliminate one of the main sections of the bill, whereby they could get the right to use copyrighted music without compensation.

Once more a committee of prominent authors and song writers went to Washington. It was headed by the president of the American Society of Composers, Authors and Publishers, Mr. Gene Buck, as well as by E. C. Mills, chairman of the Music Publishers Protective Association, together with their attorney, Mr. Nathan Burkan, and Mr. E. C. Rosenthal, general manager of the American Society of Composers, Authors, and Publishers. The following well-known writers also went: Harry Von Tilzer, Irving Berlin, John Philip Sousa, Augustus Thomas, Con Conrad, Otto Harbach, Harry B. Smith, Irving Caesar, Max Dreyfus, Joseph Meyers, Raymond Hubbell, Silvio Hein, Jerome Kern, J. Witmark, Harry Tierney, Joe McCarthy, Saul Bornstein, Theodore Morse, William Jerome, Oly Speaks, Werner Jansen, Jack Yellen, Earl Carroll, Percy Wenrich, the late Victor Herbert, and myself.

Two bills were introduced, one by Senator Dill and another by Congressman Newton, both bearing on the same subject and objectionable to authors and composers.

The National Press Club of Washington enter-



Committee of authors and composers who went to Washington in 1924 to protect their rights in the
Copyright Law of 1909

The Copyright Bills

tained us at their club. In return, Mr. Gene Buck, our president, requested every member of the composing fraternity present to play or sing one of his own compositions. I shall never forget when the club members called for Victor Herbert. They surprised him by procuring a cello, Herbert's favorite instrument, from a local theater. It was handed to him, and he had quite a job tuning up. When he started to play his last beautiful song, *A Kiss in the Dark*, the instrument got out of tune, which embarrassed him very much. Suddenly he turned to Gene Buck and said: "This is a rotten fiddle; take it away."

The entertainment lasted until early next morning. Many senators and congressmen attended, including Senator Dill, Senator Copeland, and Congressman Newton.

The next morning we were all escorted to the White House to meet President Coolidge. I shall never forget dear old Herbert on that occasion, as we marched in line to the room. We were all introduced to the President one by one. I happened to be just back of Herbert, who, after we had shaken hands with the President and were on our way out, turned to me and said: "Charley, I'm going to vote for Al Smith just the same." I had all I could do to keep from laughing out loud.

Another incident regarding Victor Herbert belongs to the time when the Senatorial Committee

After the Ball

were out to vote upon another bill, and we had the room to ourselves. Victor, picking up a newspaper and holding it before him as if it were a piece of music, said: "Gentlemen, I will give you an imitation of Charley Harris singing *After the Ball* last night at the Press Club." Everybody said that it was a wonderful imitation and was a scream. Dear old Victor! There was a man with the heart of a boy!

While I am on the subject of Victor Herbert, I recall an incident while taking lunch at the Lambs Club. I ordered some wheat cakes, and they had just been brought in by the waiter, when I felt two arms around my shoulders. Glancing up, I saw Herbert smiling down on me, and, pointing to the cakes, he said: "Don't eat those things, C. K.; they are not good for your stomach."

"What is the difference so long as they agree with me?" said I.

"Charlie, you and I are getting too old for pancakes."

"That reminds me, Victor," said I; "I have some bad news for you."

Both Victor and I had attended as pall-bearers many recent funerals of our best-known writers, among them those of Lew Hirsch, Rennold Wolf, Gustav Kerker, Glen McDonough, and Aaron Hoffman.

"Who is it this time?" asked Victor.

"Poor Teddy Morse," said I.

The Copyright Bills

Victor was shocked and asked: "When did he die?"

"Last night," said I. "His funeral will be Wednesday at ten o'clock."

He walked away to another table to join other friends. I do not know what possessed me, but before I left the club I walked over to Herbert's table.

Placing my arms about his shoulders, I said: "Victor, take my advice and don't eat a sandwich; it will give you indigestion."

He smiled and said: "Charlie, I can eat nails."

When I returned to my office an hour later, I received a 'phone call from E. C. Rosenthal, manager of the American Society of Composers, Authors and Publishers, instructing me as secretary of the association to send out notices of the death of Victor Herbert.

The following Wednesday I attended Theodore Morse's funeral at ten in the morning and Victor Herbert's at one o'clock in the afternoon.

Victor Herbert lived to see, what was so dear to his heart, the copyright bill favoring the composers left on the statute books unchanged.

The publishers, after moving uptown, were paying the singers all kinds of money for singing their compositions, with the result that the publishers were trying to outbid one another for the services of these singers. Business was in a state of chaos. Some-

After the Ball

thing had to be done, otherwise the publishing of popular music would be swept away. The publishers were being held up not only by the singers, whom you could hardly blame for accepting the money, but by orchestra leaders, who also were receiving pay from the publishers to play their compositions. The publishers were flooded with benefit tickets from nearly every association connected with the theatrical business, from the scene shifters, ushers, electricians, and treasurers, who were giving balls and entertainments and selling tickets for them. Thousands of throw-aways were being printed continually by the publishers for amateur shows given by baseball and athletic clubs, which asked for printed throw-aways to advertise their organizations. This amounted to thousands of dollars. The publishers were in a quandary, because if one did not accede to these demands, another would. At all the bicycle races held at Madison Square Garden—so keen was these publishers' rivalry in those unprincipled days—bids were offered by the publishers for the privilege of having their songs exploited by their song pluggers. The publishers outbid each other. The result of all this was that whatever money the publishers were making out of the popular song business was being eaten up by the enormous expense connected with the publishing game.

This went on until, in sheer desperation, a few of the big publishers called a meeting to see if some-

The Copyright Bills

thing could not be done to stop the awful waste. The first meeting was held at the Hotel Astor, and resulted in the formation of a society called the Music Publishers' Protective Association. Officers were elected and rules formulated. Our first manager was Maurice Goodman, attorney of the B. F. Keith interests. After his resignation, Pat Casey was made general manager. Owing to the fact that Pat had been appointed manager of the Vaudeville Managers' Protective Association, and because he did not think he could give his entire time to our association, we were compelled to accept his resignation. In his place we engaged E. C. Mills, who has remained manager of our association for the last seven years.

One of our important rules is that no singers are to be paid under any circumstances for the singing of songs of any publisher belonging to the association; and this rule has been strictly adhered to. All throw-aways and advertising graft have been entirely eliminated.

Another wonderful object achieved by the association is the Copyright Bureau of Titles. Once a publisher sends his title for registration, no other publisher can use that same title, which does away entirely with the former conflict of titles. It has been Mr. Mills' ambition, which no doubt will soon be realized, that all law-suits cropping up between the publishers should be settled by the association, instead of having resort to expensive litigation.

After the Ball

A better feeling also exists at present among the publishers, owing to the association. Meetings are held three or four times a month. Publishers learn from one another and swap ideas, telling their troubles, which, naturally, teaches them what to avoid. The publishers have found that an interchange of ideas brings good results, for if one publisher is successful, there is no reason why another should not be.

The intense rivalry which existed in Tin Pan Alley has been almost eliminated. The music industry is run on a better business basis. Publishers do not depreciate one another's songs as heretofore. The slogan at the present time is, Let the Best Song Win.

CHAPTER XVI

Plugging My Shows and Other Matters

How I Plugged "A Knight For A Day"—What's In a Name?—Songs That Made Shows Famous—Song Writers Setting Dance-Fashions—A Song Writers' and Publishers' Who's Who.

CHARLES BURNHAM, for many years manager of Wallack's Theatre, New York City, was a very dear friend of mine, and many a night I sat with him and Harrison Fisher, the artist, in the box-office of Burnham's theatre. I had just written a new song, entitled *Yesterday*, and was looking about for some unique, attractive title-page. I asked Mr. Fisher whether he would not draw for me the head of a beautiful girl.

"Why go to all that trouble?" he asked. "I have a book containing all my heads, from which you may choose the one you like best and use it with my compliments." I thought this very nice of Mr. Fisher, as he was very highly paid for drawing these beautiful heads, which adorned many leading magazines.

Mr. Burnham then told me that he was anxious to secure a musical attraction to follow "Alias Jimmie Valentine," which was then playing at his

After the Ball

theatre. I told him I was publishing a musical show, entitled "A Knight For A Day," with such artists as Johnnie Slavin and Mabel Hite, and a splendid singing and dancing cast, which was proving quite a sensation at B. C. Whitney's Theatre, Chicago. Mr. Burnham showed me a telegram from George Kingsbury, a popular Chicago manager, who wanted to book his attraction, then playing at the Studebaker Theatre, entitled "The Man From Home," starring William Hodge.

"I am going to Chicago tomorrow," said Burnham, "how would you like to come along? We will take in both shows, and the one I like best I will book for my theatre."

I jumped at the chance. Reaching Chicago on an afternoon when William Hodge was giving a matinee, we took in the show. George Kingsbury was delighted to see us, and during the performance tried to impress upon Burnham what a hit the show would be in New York. When we returned to our hotel, Burnham asked me what I thought of the show. I really was quite lukewarm, but, knowing Mr. Hodge personally (I met him when he was with Weber and Fields), did not want to knock the show. I simply said: "It is a very quiet show. I do not know whether New York will take to it. See my show tonight, and then you can form your own opinion."

I called Mr. B. C. Whitney, manager of "A Knight

Plugging My Shows and Other Matters

For A Day" Company, on the 'phone and told him confidentially why I was in Chicago. Knowing that he was very anxious to secure a booking for his show in New York, I told him to tell Johnnie Slavin and Mabel Hite, as well as the chorus, to work as they had never worked before and to give a red-hot show. I also told him to put several pluggers in different parts of the house and see to it that every song received several encores.

That night Mr. Burnham and I sat in a box. The house was packed. The show went like wildfire. Every song took repeated encores. Both Slavin and Miss Hite scored many laughs. Mr. Burnham seemed very much pleased. After the show Mr. Whitney and Mr. Burnham got together and that very night contracts were signed for "A Knight For a Day," to open at Wallack's Theatre, New York. Both Johnnie Slavin and May Vokes, who had replaced Miss Hite, were the talk of the town the following morning. Burnham was naturally very much delighted, and the show ran the entire season.

A few weeks later, while I was sitting in Burnham's office, he said to me: "You told me 'The Man from Home,' with Mr. Hodge, would not catch on, being too quiet for New York. You're a bum critic, Harris."

The embarrassing part of it was that the Hodge show had opened in New York a few weeks after "A Knight For A Day," and was also a big hit. I really

After the Ball

did not know how to answer Burnham, not wishing to tell him that I was not to be blamed for plugging the show I was publishing, or for doing some knocking to get mine in.

I really do not know whether Mr. Burnham has ever heard this story before.

A short while after, I secured the rights from Messrs. Sam and Lee Shubert to publish the entire score of a new musical show in which Sam Bernard was to star. All the music was ready to go to press, but no title had yet been selected for the show. Though I called up the Shuberts several times, I could get no definite information on the subject. No one knew what the title was to be; and, of course, I could not print any of the music without a title. The show was to open within a week. The Shuberts advertised that they would present a box to any person suggesting a good title for the show. They must have received a great many suggestions, but none was accepted. Happening to meet Sam Bernard in a Broadway Street car one morning on his way to rehearsal, I asked him if they had as yet selected a title, and he said no.

"What is the story about?" I asked.

He said he was playing the part of a beer brewer from Milwaukee, bound for Europe to spend his first vacation, who, while on the boat, is mistaken for a German baron.

Plugging My Shows and Other Matters

"Well," said I, "that is simple. Why not call the show, 'He Came From Milwaukee'?—which, you know, is my home town."

"By Jove, Charlie," said Sam, so loud that every one in the car looked around at us startled, "you have struck it."

Sure enough, the show was so named, running the entire season under that name at the Herald Square Theatre and afterward touring the country with great success.

Speaking of titles, reminds me of the following: While traveling from Milwaukee to New York, I met on the train the late Jacob Litt, lessee of the Broadway Theatre, New York. He was the producer of the well-known play, "In Old Kentucky," which cleaned up a fortune for everyone connected with it and which was made into a wonderful motion picture many years later.

Mr. Litt said: "You know, Harris, I would give \$10,000 cash for a title as good as 'In Old Kentucky'."

"Is that so, Mr. Litt," said I: "I would give \$50,000 spot cash for another title as good as 'After the Ball'."

He looked at me for a moment, smiling, and then said: "I guess you are right, there certainly is a great deal in a title. Many a good show would have fallen flat, many a good song, book, and play would never have succeeded at all were it not for

After the Ball

a happy title. A good, catchy title is half the battle. Such titles are few and far between, and they are worth their weight in gold."

There are many instances on record where the success of a show was due to a single song. The "Merry Widow" made a sensational hit owing to the waltz tune, *The Merry Widow Waltz*. The Winter Garden, managed by the Shuberts, was put on the road to fame by the music of the late Louis Hirsch, who wrote the celebrated *Gaby Glide*, for "Gaby Deslys." Mr. Hirsch wrote also the popular song *The Love Nest*, which was sung in "Mary." "The Henpecks" contained *There's a Girl in Havana*.

The Ziegfeld Follies, which opened on the New York Roof, had a song written by Harry Von Tilzer and entitled *Row, Row, Row*, which also helped to make the show a success.

Charles Dillingham's production, "The Slim Princess," with Elsie Janis, had an interpolated song, entitled *Bless Your Ever-Loving Heart*.

"Florodora," which opened in New York and was panned unmercifully by the critics, was doomed for Cain's storehouse, when all at once the people began to hum and whistle *Tell Me, Pretty Maiden*, and the New York orchestras played it nightly to great applause. The song became so popular that people soon flocked to see the show, so that from a failure "Floradora" turned into one of the biggest musical successes that ever played New York City.

Plugging My Shows and Other Matters

Another show, which opened in Chicago and was called "Three Twins," written by Charles Dickson, with music by the late Karl Hoschna, contained a song which created a sensation on the opening night and made the show a success. That song was *The Yama-Yama Man*, sung by Bessie McCoy.

"Madame Sherry" had a big hit entitled *Every Little Movement Has a Meaning All Its Own*.

"The Prince of Tonight," produced by Mortimer H. Singer, music by Joseph E. Howard, also contained a song which was instrumental in making the show a success—*I Wonder Who's Kissing Her Now*. For many years it used to be the custom of the dancing masters throughout the United States to hold a convention and decide what new dance-steps were to be taught and what dances should be in vogue in a given season. This custom prevailed up to two or three years ago. Today that is controlled by the popular song writers of this country.

For instance, Joe Gold and Eugene West, two well known song writers, who were employed by me as pianist and lyric writer, collaborated on a song entitled *Everybody Shimmies Now*. It was introduced at the Winter Garden by May West, comedienne, who shrugged her shoulders while singing it. This started the "shimmy dance," which created a sensation throughout the United States. Miss Gilda Gray was another dancer who made it popular, as was also Miss Bee Palmer of the Ziegfeld Follies.

After the Ball

In fact, many vaudevillians used the song in their acts. It made such a success that its fame reached Europe; and I sold the French rights to Salabert & Sons, of Paris. The song made as great a hit in France as in America.

Another song which started a new dance was called *Everybody's Doing it Now*. It created the "fox-trot." Every publisher at that time arranged his songs, whether marches, classical numbers, or heart-story ballads, into fox-trot time. The mechanical manufacturers were in their glory, selling more dance-records than anything else. Thousands upon thousands of these records were sold. The lyrics to these songs were atrocious, but that did not seem to matter as long as the music was in fox-trot time.

The two popular songs which started the jazz craze were *Frisco Friz* and *Bunny Hug*.

The *Burglar Buck* song originated the old negro buck-dance.

Scratching the Gravel, a rag-time syncopated number, started the one-step.

The *Argentina Tango*, written by Harry Reichenback, the motion picture publicity man, introduced and popularized the "tango."

Rastus in Parade and *Smokey Mokes*, were responsible for the "cake walk" craze.

On came the jazz bands and newly organized jazz orchestras, with the following instruments: piano, banjo, mandolin, clarinet, saxophone, and drum.

Plugging My Shows and Other Matters

The drummer's corner is a regular curiosity shop, containing cymbals, bells, whistle, and a dozen other contraptions, each instrument trying to outdo the other in a blare of noise.

All the tunes sounded alike. Publishers printed carloads of these numbers, giving them outlandish titles, such as *The Livery Stable Blues*, *Horsefly Blues*, *Bad News Blues*, *Tin Pan Blues*, *Swat 'em in the Eyes Blues*, and so forth. The title did not matter in the least as long as it ended with the word "blues."

The dances used in the old days—such as the "Redowa," the "Newport," the "Schottische," the "Knickerbocker," the "Waltz Quadrille"—have all passed into the discard.

Nevertheless, the "waltz" still holds its own. *After the Ball* is played almost as much today as it ever was. The waltz will never die.

What occupation some of the writers and publishers followed before embarking in the music business might prove of some interest.

Leo Wood was at one time employed by Charles K. Harris as an errand boy.

Victor Herbert had played the 'cello in Gilmore's Band.

Joseph E. Howard blacked boots in Denver, Colo.
Ballard McDonald was an attorney.

Joe Rosey was a jewelry salesman.

After the Ball

Louis Bernstein was a bookkeeper in a shirt-waist house.

Gene Buck was a designer of song title pages.

Harry Williams studied law.

Maurice Abrahams was an actor, song writer and song plugger.

Louis Hirsch was sent to Europe to study for concert work and graduated into writing popular songs.

Will Rossiter was a Chicago printer.

Monroe H. Rosenfeld was a newspaper writer.

Ernest Hogan was an actor.

John Stromberg was leader of the Weber & Fields orchestra.

Cole & Johnson were actors.

Maude Nugent was a vaudevillian.

Harry Kennedy was a ventriloquist.

Dave Marion was a burlesque comedian.

Clare Kummer was a playwright.

Anita Owens was a concert pianist.

Charles Horwitz was a bookkeeper.

Abe Holzman was a traveling salesman.

Cy Warman was a railroad brakeman.

George M. Cohan was a vaudevillian.

Karl Hoschner, arranger of music for Witmark.

Ernest Ball, author of such wonderful successes as *Mother Machree* and *Love Me and the World is Mine*, was formerly a piano player with T. B. Harms.

Gus Edwards was a child actor.

Plugging My Shows and Other Matters

Edgar Van Alstine, who, in conjunction with Harry Williams, wrote *In the Shade of the Old Apple Tree*, was an orchestra leader.

William Jerome, who had collaborated with Gene Schwartz on "Mr. Dooley," etc., was an actor.

Gene Schwartz was a piano player at Siegel and Cooper's Dry Goods Store.

Irving Berlin and Max Winslow were singing waiters at the Chatham Club down on the East Side.

Harry Von Tilzer was an actor who appeared with George Sidney in several plays.

Will Von Tilzer, who wrote *Adrienne*, had studied law.

F. A. Mills, known as Kerry Mills, taught violin at the Detroit Conservatory of music.

Al Jolson, formerly of San Francisco, was an illustrated slide song singer.

Jimmie Kendis, of the team of Kendis and Brockman, was a piano player at the Seminole Club, New York.

CHAPTER XVII

A Few Notables

Meeting Hans Bartsch and Martin Beck—Leo Fall's Musical Operas—Franz Lehar—I Ask King Alphonso for a Light—A Lesson from the Trip. My First Meeting With Zit—My Only Meeting with Booker T. Washington—Jesse L. Lasky, Mitchell Mark, and S. L. Rothapfel—A Call from the Composer of Pagliacci—I offer Moritz Rosenthal a Job.

IN 1911 I took a trip abroad. I recall meeting in Berlin Hans Bartsch, who was the American representative for a large German producing company, besides representing Franz Lehar's production, "The Merry Widow," and Leo Fall's production, "The Dollar Princess." Bartsch invited me for dinner to the Ice Palace, a beautiful place where a regular musical show on skates was being given and where visitors were allowed to skate during the intermission. When its large orchestra struck up *After the Ball*, all the Americans present gave it a big hand. A gentleman in the box next to mine tapped me on the shoulder and said as I turned

A Few Notables

around: "Charlie, I must say you are a darned good song plugger." That was none other than Martin Beck, then President of the Orpheum Circuit, who was also doing Europe at the time. It certainly handed me a good laugh, as I was through plugging *After the Ball*, the days for plugging that song having long since passed.

There is a very cozy little theatre at Carlsbad, where Leo Fall was then giving a series of his famous musical operas, changed nightly. Imagine my pleasant surprise on getting a letter from Mr. Fall one day enclosing a complimentary ticket for myself and family for the entire run of his productions at that little theatre. After the performance I had the pleasure of meeting both Mr. and Mrs. Fall. Though the former could not speak a word of English, his wife was a very fluent English talker. I asked why Fall had not as yet visited America, and was told that he was afraid to cross the Atlantic. Recently, however, Mr. Fall has braved the ocean voyage to witness the New York première of his new musical show, "Madame Pompadour."

Mr. Lehar, one of the most charming men I ever met, took three nights off to entertain me and my family. Together with Mr. Bartsch, we certainly did Berlin to the Queen's taste.

I recall a humorous incident on my arrival in London, just before returning to America. In front of the Hotel Ritz, where I was to stop, I found on my

After the Ball

arrival a crowd of hundreds of people. Jokingly I said to my friends who were with me that I had not expected such an ovation. When I had registered I asked the clerk: "Is this reception for me?"

He looked at me in surprise and said: "My dear Sir, they are waiting for King Alphonso of Spain, who is a great favorite in London and who is stopping at this hotel."

"Excuse me," said I, "I thought it was all in my honor."

After dinner, the demi-tasse was served in an anteroom off the dining room. Consequently, there were no matches on the table. Wishing to light my cigar, I walked over to the desk where matches were obtainable. Just at that moment a gentleman lit his cigarette, and, walking over to him, I said: "Hold it a moment, please." The gentleman turned around and held the match to my cigar. I thanked him, whereupon he bowed courteously and turned away.

Meanwhile the clerk had been watching me in astonishment. "Don't yer know who that gentleman is?" he asked.

"No," said I.

"My dear man, that is King Alphonso.

"Is that possible?"

"And you asked him for a light!"

"Sure, why not?"

I walked away smiling. The following morning, which happened to be Sunday, my English agent,

A Few Notables

Mr. Bert Feldman, sent several young newspaper reporters to interview me regarding my new songs. The boys called at the hotel and asked the clerk if I was in my room. The clerk, knowing that they were reporters, eyed the young men in surprise.

"I will see," said he. He called me on the telephone, and I told him I would be down immediately.

"I suppose you know who Mr. Harris is?" one of the boys then said to him.

"Why, no," said the clerk.

"He is the man who wrote *After the Ball* and *Break the News to Mother*," said the reporter.

"My Gawd!" exclaimed the clerk, "it's the chap who asked the King of Spain for a light.

Many more pages could be filled with interesting incidents connected with my European trip, but I will conclude by saying that I certainly had the time of my life while abroad.

One thing I learned while in Europe—that if one is connected in any way with painting, sculpture, music, or literature, he is received there with open arms. The classical composers seldom condescend to recognize the popular song writers. Yet, it is my humble opinion that many a popular song writer, who cannot play or write a single note and who picks out the tunes on the piano with a single finger, often has more melody in his soul than a great many of the others. At any rate, one thing that the classical

After the Ball

writers sometimes lack—melodic invention—seems to come more naturally to the popular song writer.

One afternoon a nattily dressed young chap called at my office on 31st Street, New York, and asked for an interview. On being shown in, he told me of a young Italian sculptor who had just then arrived from Italy and who was as yet unknown here. The man said, that this sculptor was taking orders for busts and asked me to be the first publisher to sit for one, being sure that all the other publishers would follow suit.

I laughed and said: "Young fellow, I am not dead yet. What do I want with a bust? A photograph is good enough for me and serves all my purposes."

"But just think," he said, "of posterity. You can't live forever, and what an ad for your business this would be, as all the actors visiting your office would see and talk about your bust throughout the country, attracting every singer to your office to gaze at it. Anyway, come down and meet this young fellow. I know you will be interested."

More to get rid of him than anything else, I accompanied him to the Italian quarters, way down on the East Side, and was escorted to an old tumble-down shanty, the workshop of the young Italian genius.

I was introduced to him and, I must say, he certainly looked the part of a sculptor. He im-

A Few Notables

mediately asked me to be seated and to look as if posing for a picture. After looking at me for a moment, the artist started to dig away with his deft fingers at a large lump of clay reposing on a pedestal. First a nose appeared and then part of an ear. Naturally, I became interested and promised I would be there faithfully the next afternoon. For four weeks, every afternoon at four o'clock, I sat for that bust and watched it grow into shape. When at last it was finished, one could not tell whether it was the bust of John L. Sullivan or that of William Muldoon. That last afternoon I left the studio in disgust. The next morning an expressman dumped a package into my office, with a bill attached. I opened it and beheld the bust. More for a joke than for anything else, I placed it in the reception room, where all the actors usually congregated. Talk about a sensation! That bust certainly was one. The more the actors looked at it, the less they knew who it was; and to this very day that bust has remained a mystery to them. When I moved from 31st Street to my present quarters on 47th Street, I threw that lump of clay into the ash can.

A short time after this incident the same young fellow came to see me again, and I told him that I admired his nerve. I asked him why he did not use his talents to some better purpose, assuring him that he would make a fine publicity man, since he could seemingly talk any one into buying the City Hall.

After the Ball

"Why not establish a connection with some big newspaper?" I suggested. "Think up some new ideas—for instance, watch my advertisements, which appear weekly in the *New York Clipper*."

I thereupon showed him a copy of the paper. It had a square four-inch space in one corner, headed, "The Charles K. Harris Herald." Within that space I had many news items about singers then appearing in New York and the theatres at which they appeared, together with a list of the songs they were singing. As most of the singers liked to have their names mentioned in the *Herald* and would use my songs in order to get this free publicity, the idea was quite a publicity stunt.

The young fellow took the paper with him. A few weeks later there appeared in the *New York Evening Journal* a racing chart containing the names of all singers appearing in the different vaudeville theatres in the city. The singing stars were in the first race, winners; and there were first, second, and third races. The idea was a veritable innovation, and was utilized in the *Journal* every Saturday night for many years. The genius who conceived it was none other than Zittel, known as Zit, now publisher of *Zit's Weekly*.

While I was on my way to Washington to attend the Copyright Conference in 1909, there was sitting opposite me on the train a colored gentleman reading

A Few Notables

a book. The porter told me that this was the celebrated Booker T. Washington, of Tuskegee, Alabama. As Mr. Washington was one of the most famous colored men of his day in America, I was, naturally, much impressed. Happening to sit opposite each other in the dining car, I had a good chance to observe this distinguished gentleman. After glancing over the menu and giving his order, he addressed me, saying, "I am always at a loss what to order; as a rule, one eats too much on the train, and usually dishes he does not get at home."

This started our conversation. Mr. Washington said he was on his way to the Capital, having received an invitation from President Roosevelt to take dinner with him at the White House,—an invitation which, as many will remember, created quite a discussion at the time throughout the United States. He told me also about his famous school in Alabama, which was a subject very dear to his heart. His eyes sparkled as the great educator told me of all the wonderful boys and girls he was turning out at that unique institution.

Suddenly he said: "I guess I have been talking too much about myself. What business are you in?"

I told him I was a song writer and publisher.

"What kind of songs do you write?"

Heart-story ballads, I said, adding that I had written several songs of the South—such as *I've a Longing in My Heart for You, Louise; In the Vale*

After the Ball

*of Shenandoah; In the Hills of Old Carolina; and
'Mid the Green Fields of Virginia.*

"I remember that song very well," said he, "as my pupils play and sing it very often in our school. So, that is your own composition?"

"Yes," said I.

"You evidently were born in the South," said he.

"No," said I, "I have never been South in my life."

"Then, how did you come to write so many Southern songs, with such delightful Southern melodies, without ever visiting the parts you mention in the songs?"

"All imagination," said I, "I had to inquire if there was corn raised in Virginia and if there were hills in Carolina. This information, was given me by my office superintendent, Mr. Blaise, a native Southerner, and my imagination did the rest."

We soon reached Washington and shook hands heartily. I wished him luck. This was the only time I ever saw Booker T. Washington.

On one occasion when I was at Rector's Hotel I noticed at the next table Jesse L. Lasky, Arthur Friend, the attorney, Cecil de Mille, and Mr. Goldfish. I walked over to their table and said in a joking tone: "This looks like a conspiracy."

"It is," said Mr. Lasky smilingly, "and you are just the man we want to join this conference."

A Few Notables

Arthur Friend did the talking and came to the point at once.

"Charlie, you know me, being from Milwaukee; and my brother Charles was your attorney for many years. We are forming the Jesse L. Lasky Feature Film Company and need \$3800 more to start. This is going to be a \$50,000 corporation."

"Why not each of us take an equal share?" I asked.

Mr. Lasky said that the stock had already been distributed and that \$3800 was all they needed. I told them I would think it over; and then the matter slipped my memory.

Just imagine what that \$3800 would be worth today! This is the kind of mistakes that happen in everyone's life.

Jesse L. Lasky made more than good with Cecil de Mille and his brother William, combining shortly after with Adolph Zukor in the Paramount and Famous Players Company. A year later Mr. Goldfish withdrew and formed the Goldwyn Company. Every gentleman I met at Rector's that day is a millionaire today.

My first meeting with Mitchell Mark, builder of the Strand Theater, was in my home town. He was employing a singer to sing, with colored slides, in the various department stores in the cities he visited which had music departments. He received a percentage for the music sold during the time he showed

After the Ball

his act. Publishers furnished him with slides gratis, and Mark was making fine money out of it.

The following year Mr. Mark again visited my office, but with a different scheme. He said he had two dozen penny slot-machines. By dropping a penny into the machine a popular song could be heard from a wax disk. I could not see, I told him, how he could make any money out of a penny a throw; but he believed that if he could get a lease on a corner store next to my building, which was on the main street, he could clean up a small fortune. I called on the landlord and told him that the gentleman was O.K. He obtained the lease, installed the machines, and it was a success from the start. In six months he sold out to a Chicago syndicate for a very large sum.

Ten years later he came into my office in the Columbia Theater Building, New York, accompanied by Max Spiegel, who was then connected with the Columbia Amusement Company. They had already built the foundation for the Strand Theater, but were short of money to continue operations and asked me to put \$10,000 into the venture. I told Mr. Mark that I did not care to become a theatrical manager or proprietor of a theater, as I had my hands full attending to the publishing business.

I wish now that I had had the foresight to go into it. The theater was built, and again Mr. Mark and Mr. Spiegel came to see me, saying that the theater

A Few Notables

was ready, but that they were at a loss to know what use to put it to.

"We have received," said Mr. Mark, "from several well-known theatrical managers offers for a lease for a term of years."

They asked me what I thought of the idea.

I said: "I know you will laugh at me, but if I owned that theater, there is only one thing I would turn it into and that's a moving-picture theater. It would be the only one on Broadway and you would clean up a fortune."

"Whom can we get to manage it?" asked Mark.

"I have just the man you want. He is from Milwaukee and ran pictures in the Alhambra Theater with great success. He is now managing The Regent Theater, One Hundred and Sixteenth Street and Seventh Avenue. Let's take a run up there tonight and I will introduce you to him." This we did.

This manager was Mr. S. L. Rothapfel, otherwise known as Roxy. They met the next day in my office, where they came to terms. Mr. Rothapfel said: "I will accept your offer on one condition, and that is that you give me a free hand. I want to furnish the interior of that theater in my own way. I also want to engage a big orchestra and put on shows entirely different from anything that has been done before."

Mr. Mark said: "Go as far as you like, and I will stand back of you."

After the Ball

The result was that Mr. Rothapfel not only made the Strand a great success, but did the same later on for the Rivoli and Rialto as well. He also made the Capitol Theater the talk of the town. Rothapfel was the first to engage for motion-picture theaters orchestral conductors of national reputation.

I was agreeably surprised one day to receive a visit from the celebrated composer of *Pagliacci*, Leon Cavello, who had been prevailed upon by the Mittenthal Brothers, theatrical managers, to give a series of concerts under their direction. I was informed by his interpreter—the composer himself spoke no English—that Adelina Patti, who was a great friend of Cavello's, had told him to see me before having anything published in America. I felt quite flattered by the compliment. The great Italian showed me a manuscript which he had just completed, an *Ave Maria*, dedicated to His Holiness, Pope Pius X, who had acknowledged the compliment in a letter written in Latin. With the indispensable help of his interpreter, and after innumerable gestures by the eminent composer, the royalty contracts were signed at last, and the song published.

It was not, I might add, a howling success, as the singers who visited my offices were looking for popular songs, and not for classical numbers. How-

A Few Notables

ever, it was a good advertisement for my catalogue.

I was at the newsstand in the Hotel Imperial, New York, and ordered a box of cigars sent to my office. "I will have them there in ten minutes, Mr. Harris," said the clerk. A short, dark-haired man, who was also buying a cigar at the time, looked up on hearing my name.

"Are you Mr. Harris, the music publisher?" he asked.

"Yes," said I.

"Would you kindly accommodate me with some of your latest professional copies of music, as I have a sister in Europe who is fond of your compositions."

"Certainly," said I. "Just walk over with me to my office, and I will fix you up."

He accompanied me to my office, where a few minutes later I was called downstairs on an important matter. I asked the stranger to be seated and make himself at home. On returning, I heard some one playing in my piano room—playing that was a real revelation to me. I asked the man where he had studied. He smiled and said he had taken a few lessons from the masters on the other side. I then asked him if he would not like a position as pianist in my studio. He replied that it would be impossible, as he was giving twenty concerts through-

After the Ball

out the United States the coming season, opening that very night at Carnegie Hall. He finally said that his name was Rosenthal.

"Rosenthal, the great pianist?" I asked in amazement.

"Yes," said he.

I almost dropped through the floor. He invited me to his first concert, which I attended, spending a most enjoyable evening. I laugh even now to think of having asked the great Rosenthal to accept a position as a piano player in my studio.

CHAPTER XVIII

A Few Incidents

I Save Eddie Cantor for Comedy—I Get a Strange Legacy—My “Somewhere the Sun is Shining” Reunites Man and Wife—Sweet Lillian Russell—Barrymore on the Witness Stand—An Anecdote about O. Henry—F. P. A.—Douglas Fairbanks—I Buy Mary Pickford at Auction.

WHILE the interior scenes for “When It Strikes Home” were being made, there was also a comedy picture being photographed at the other end of the studio. One of the actresses engaged in making that comedy film walked over to where a large set had been erected for my picture and where the company was then rehearsing. Very much interested, the actress asked me who the leading man was. I told her Edwin August. She then inquired who was the leading lady.

“And the sweet ingenue?” she continued.

“Muriel Ostriche,” said I.

“Are you in the picture?” she asked.

“Oh, no,” said I; “I’m only the author.”

“Well, that’s something,” said she.

The young lady in question was Miss Pearl Shep-

After the Ball

pard, who afterwards appeared in my picture, "Break the News to Mother."

During the run of my "After the Ball" photoplay in the East a young man rushed into my office and asked me whether I could furnish a singer to sing *After the Ball* between the reels of the picture, then being shown at the Gem Theatre, Williamsburg, New York. He said he was the resident manager, and, being a new man in the business, was trying to make good.

I said I was very sorry, but we were not furnishing singers at that time. "I'll tell you what I will do," said I. "I will come over myself and say a few words to the audience, if that will help you out."

"I would rather have a good singer," said he.

"Well," said I, "would you not rather have the author of the song and the man who wrote the story?"

"Are you Mr. Harris?" he asked.

"Yes," said I.

"You would not come over there."

"Why not?" said I.

"You are too busy."

"That makes no difference," I said. "What time is your first show over?"

"Nine-fifteen."

"Well, I will give you a bunch of title pages of all my latest songs, including *After the Ball*; also a photograph of myself, which you can display out-

A Few Incidents

side the theatre on a billboard announcing the fact that the author will be present on Monday night at the second show."

That Monday morning it was raining pitchforks, but at nine o'clock the young manager was waiting in my office to see me. My secretary asked him what he was waiting for. He replied that he had come to make sure Mr. Harris was going to appear that night. My secretary assured him that I always kept my word.

A few minutes before the second showing of the picture I was greeted by the manager. The house was packed from pit to dome, and I asked him confidentially what sort of people patronized his theater. He said most of them were "kikes"; a few were Italians, and some Negroes. The gallery, he added, was one of the toughest in the neighborhood; but, he assured me, he had me well protected, having placed four big, strong men in the gallery to see that no one threw things upon the stage, besides having several men pacing up and down the aisles to see that there was no disturbance. Not very encouraging, I thought, but made up my mind to take a chance.

As I faced the audience I wondered who would throw the first object. Still, I started in bravely: "Ladies and Gentlemen: When my pictures appeared in Broadway theaters I have been offered a thousand dollars to make personal appearances,

After the Ball

which I refused. But when a young Jewish boy, just starting out as manager of a motion-picture theater and eager to make good, came to me and laid his cards on the table, I decided to help him out,—and here I am."

I shall never forget the outburst of enthusiasm from every part of the house. Glancing up at the gallery, I asked: "Boys, can you hear me up there?" I was answered with, "Sure, go ahead," and "Shoot, you're all right. You're better than the picture." Then I said: "Say, boys, don't be ashamed to sit upstairs in the gallery. I sat up there myself many a time; in fact, I shined boots to pay my way up there. If you will work hard and be honest, you too will all be able to sit downstairs like other folks." At that I could see old people in the orchestra nudging one another, as if to say: "You are right, Mr. Harris, you are right." I then went into several little episodes of the hardships I had gone through.

When I had finished my talk and walked down the aisle, I was almost mobbed by the audience, who crowded around me, patting me on the back—all eager to shake hands with me for the heart-to-heart talk I had given them. There was not the least bit of a disturbance.

How well I recall the first day in my new office in the Columbia Theatre Building, Broadway and 47th Street, all freshly painted and newly furnished.

A Few Incidents

I came rather early that morning to open up before any of my employees arrived. I heard a knock on the door and wondered who would be the first visitor. As I opened the door I was greeted by a stranger, with a manuscript under his arm. Wanting first to learn the nature of his business, I did not invite him in. He said he had just written a new song, and would like to show it to me, to see if I would publish it. I asked him what the title was.

"The Undertaker's Last Ride," said he.

"Well, you just ride down the elevator as fast as you can. Don't you dare enter this office again to-day."

One day there walked into my office, on 47th Street a black-eyed boy, with a love ballad which he said he had composed.

"You say you're the author?" I asked.

"Well, I guess I am," as he answered throwing out his chest.

"Who are you?" I asked.

"Eddie Cantor," said he.

"All right," said I, "shoot."

One of my pianists played the song over, while Cantor sang it. Even the piano player had to smile.

"Is this a joke?" I asked.

"A joke!" exclaimed Cantor; "no, it's a love ballad."

"Well, my boy, as a song writer, you are a splen-

After the Ball

did comedian. Take my advice and stick to comedy; and don't meddle with love ballads, as they are entirely out of your line."

At that Cantor's face fell, but I suppose he is glad now that he did not take up ballad writing, as a career, since his show, "Kid Boots," is paying him tremendously, and he is today one of our best comedians.

My secretary one day informed me that a young priest had called to see me several times, but that I was always too busy to see him. I told her to be sure to send him in the next time he called. I was sitting with the late Walter Vaughn, editor of the *New York Clipper*, when this clergyman was announced. Looking both of us over, he asked which was Mr. Harris. When I told him, he said he wished to see me on a personal matter. I asked Mr. Vaughn to kindly step out of the room, then asked the priest what his mission was. He said he had come to New York to meet his sister, who was returning from Europe, their home being in Kansas City. While in Milwaukee he heard a confession, he said, in which my name was mentioned. He then placed a New York draft on my desk for \$600.00, made out in my favor. Asked what it was for, he said he was sorry, but as it was told to him in a confession, he could not explain. He simply said the money was mine, every penny of it. I thanked him. Before

A Few Incidents

leaving, he patted me on the back and said: "Well, Mr. Harris, the church is not so bad after all, is it?"

I asked the minister to come again and often. When I informed my friend, Mr. Vaughn, of the strange circumstances attending this call, he thought I was joking. To this day the matter remains to be cleared up. My only conjecture is that the money was undoubtedly misappropriated by one of my former employees.

I recall an amusing incident in connection with a popular ballad I had written, entitled *Would You Care?* My manager, Mr. Cohen, ever on the lookout for new ways of bringing the song before the public, decided to send out advance cards to all buyers of sheet music throughout the United States, before its publication. We printed a postal card, writing in on its back simply the title, *Would You Care?*

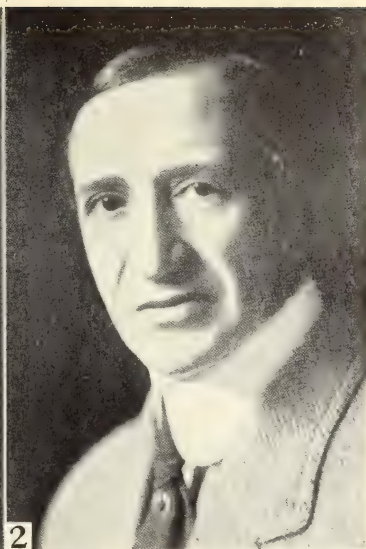
One of these postal cards was received by the sheet music buyer of Gimbel Brothers, in Philadelphia. It happened that that buyer, having had a lover's quarrel, was on the outs with his sweetheart. So, when he received the postal card with the words *Would You Care?* he was under the impression that it came from his sweetheart. He called on her that evening. She was, naturally, very much surprised to see him; but they kissed and made up. He told her that he had received her postal card and that he had recognized her handwriting. The joke was on

After the Ball

him, to be sure, but they both saw the humor of it and forgot their differences. They are now happily married. The buyer himself told me all this one day, thinking the anecdote was too good to keep to himself.

I have received a great many letters from strangers who had bought my songs, telling me of the differences my songs had healed—even such as bringing husbands and wives together after many years of separation. One case in particular was that of a traveling man who had had a quarrel with his wife which resulted in separation. Once, while at a vaudeville performance in a Southern city, he heard the song, *Somewhere the Sun Is Shining*. This affected him so much, that he at once wrote a beautiful letter to his wife, who answered it immediately, with many endearing expressions; and today they, too, are living happily together.

I remember one rainy night at the old Weber and Fields' Music Hall, after the show, when Lew, Joe, myself and several other professional people, Miss Lillian Russell among them, were sitting at a table in their café having lunch. A great many of the chorus girls were standing huddled at the stage entrance, wondering how they were going to get home, on account of the storm. They looked helplessly around, as there were no taxis in those days.



(1) Joseph Weber
(2) Lew Fields
(3) Jacob Litt
(4) John Philip Sousa

A Few Incidents

Miss Russell took in the situation at a glance, and calling the porter she said: "Round up fifteen or twenty cabs and see that all these girls get home safely," which the porter did. The girls certainly loved Lillian, each and every one of them, from the leading woman down to the chorus girls. To hear her sing *Come Down, My Evening Star*, was alone worth the price of admission. What a pleasure it was to sit with her and the boys after the show! She and Pete Dailey always joshed each other, and that was better than the show itself.

A new musical show which I had published was about to be launched at the Madison Square Garden. Maude Fulton was engaged as one of the leading soubrettes. There was quite a large cast of chorus girls, all good singers and dancers, a very fine quartet, and some splendid songs scattered throughout the show. My manager, Mr. Cohen, my superintendent, Mr. Blaise, and I were present the opening night, for the quartet was to introduce for the first time on any stage a new song I had written, entitled *Somewhere the Sun Is Shining*. I and a friend of mine were sitting in one of the boxes in the gallery facing the stage. The manager of the show told me as I entered the theater that he had walked down from Eighty-fifth Street to the Garden, for lack of carfare, having spent his last penny in producing this

After the Ball

show. He said that if it proved a flivver, he would be down and out. Naturally, we all hoped the show would prove a big success.

My manager and superintendent were seated downstairs on the main floor. Seated at the table next to them was Stanford White, who had an appointment with one of his professional friends appearing that night. During the performance a merry crowd entered. I nudged my friend and said: "That is Harry Thaw and his wife." They passed Stanford White's table and sat down a few feet behind him, listening to my song, *Somewhere*, as sung by the quartet, which went over nicely.

Near the end of the performance, just before the curtain fell, the chorus was singing *All for a Million Girls*, when I saw Thaw walk toward White's table and deliberately shoot him down. I clutched my friend's arm just as the shot was fired. Not wishing to be tangled up as witnesses in a murder trial, my friend and I walked down the spiral stairs to the ground floor and made our way to the street. An hour later extras were out heralding the news that Stanford White had been shot. As fate would have it, I was drawn as a juror for the trial. I was quaking in my boots as I was called, as every prospective juror was asked by the district attorney whether he had attended the performance the night of the shooting. On hearing my name and my business, District Attorney Jerome told Judge McIntyre, presiding at

A Few Incidents

this trial, that in his opinion I should not serve, as he had no doubt that I was acquainted with everyone involved in the case. I was excused, much to my relief. My manager, Mr. Cohen, and my superintendent, Mr. Blaise, were important witnesses in the celebrated case.

Meeting the manager of the show a few days later, I learned that the show was making a small fortune for him, as many visitors to New York were anxious to see the table and chair where Stanford White had been shot. Consequently the show remained on all season and played to a big success. If the shooting had not occurred, I doubt if the show would ever have been a success.

When Mortimer Singer, manager of musical productions, informed me that he had engaged John Barrymore to play the lead in "Stubborn Cinderella," I was very much surprised, that being the first time Barrymore ever appeared in a musical comedy. Sallie Fisher, one of the sweetest-voiced sopranos then on the musical stage, was to be the prima donna. I told Singer that I had no doubt that Barrymore was a good actor, but thought he had made a mistake in engaging him as comedian and singer.

"What good will he do for the songs I publish?" I asked.

"Don't worry," said Singer; "society will flock to see him in a musical comedy."

After the Ball

Singer was right. The show was a big success. Society did flock to the Princess Theatre to see Barrymore. But the actor did not sing a song, for as he told me in his dressing-room, singing was entirely out of his line. Barrymore was even then a *matinée* idol, and received thousands of letters from young flappers.

I recall a funny incident regarding Barrymore during his engagement at the Broadway Theater, New York. Having been discharged without due notice, one of the actors of the company was suing Singer for the balance of his season's salary. As Barrymore knew all the facts in the case, he was to be one of the chief witnesses. After the show, the night before the trial, Mr. Singer, Barrymore, and myself walked over to the Lambs Club for a little supper. We told stories and took a few drinks between us, remaining at the Club until almost four A. M.

Singer, happening to glance at his watch, said: "I guess it is about time we all turned in, as we must be in court at nine o'clock."

"Don't worry," said Barrymore, "I'll be there on time."

I smiled to myself and on our way back to the hotel offered to bet Singer that he was going to lose his main witness. I did not believe that Barrymore would be able to show up at nine that morning, and Singer agreed with me. I went to court, wondering if Barrymore would be there. Imagine our surprise

A Few Incidents

when Singer and I walked into the court room to find the actor calmly reading his morning paper, looking as spick-and-span as if he had just stepped out of a bandbox.

"Good morning," said he calmly; "take seats, but don't disturb me while I read my paper." We laughed heartily.

When the case was called Barrymore gave his testimony in a clear and direct manner. The judge was very much impressed, and, thanks to Barrymore, Singer won his case hands down. Ever since I have always had a warm spot in my heart for Barrymore.

I had contracted for a new musical show, book by O. Henry, lyrics by Franklin P. Adams, and music by A. Baldwin Sloane. It was called "Lo." O. Henry was a quiet, retiring chap, and we were together for nearly three weeks, as all the music for the show was being written in my office under his personal supervision. I invited him to take dinner with me one evening at the Lambs Club, which invitation he accepted. We entered the dining room and walked over to a table, at which there were seated David Warfield, De Wolf Hopper, Wilton Lackaye, Milton Royle, William B. Conner, William Courtleigh, Ben T. Roeder, George Fawcett, Victor Herbert, Cecil DeMille, Wallace Eddinger, Harry Allen, and Charles Hart. I introduced my guest

After the Ball

as Mr. Henry. They all acknowledged the introduction with a short bow and then forgot all about him. There O. Henry sat, quietly gazing at the various celebrities and seemingly pleased to be in such interesting company.

During the meal Wilton Lackaye, who sat next to him, casually remarked: "Are you in the profession?"

O. Henry smiled and in a quiet voice answered: "I am a writer of short stories."

"I did not quite catch your name," said Mr. Lackaye.

"O. Henry," replied he.

"You don't mean to say you are the celebrated short-story writer who wrote *Alias Jimmie Valentine* and a thousand other stories!"

"Yes," said he quietly, "that's me."

He was soon surrounded by the members of The Lambs, who heartily shook him by the hand, and all blamed me for not informing them who my guest was. That was just a little surprise I had kept under my hat, and it surely made a hit with all those present, O. Henry enjoying the joke as much as all the rest.

I recall that when I was making "When It Strikes Home," my first picture, the newspapers casually mentioned it. One noon at the Lambs Club a young actor who at that time was making quite a hit asked

A Few Incidents

me to give him a chance to appear in one of my pictures, saying that he was very anxious to go into that line of the profession.

I kidded him and said: "My dear boy, you have not the physique for a motion-picture actor. Such a man should be tall and handsome. You are not the type at all."

"Harris," said he, "I am sure I can make good. I am willing to start at seventy-five dollars a week and to sign with you on a five-year contract."

"Nothing doing," said I.

That young man was Douglas Fairbanks, today one of the biggest stars in motion pictures. I surely figured wrong that time.

I recall, too, a charity bazaar held at the Waldorf-Astoria Hotel. I donated a music booth to it and was asked to be there on a Saturday night, the last night of the affair, when all the articles left over were to be auctioned off. I gladly attended.

On the same auction block with me was a young lady who was also trying to dispose of several articles. As soon as I was through selling an article, she would burst forth and sell another. Thus it went on till we had cleaned up. Finally, the young lady was handed a beautiful doll, dressed to represent the popular picture star, Mary Pickford. Turning to me, she said: "Please, Mr. Harris, I hope you will bid on this doll, for I want you to have it."

After the Ball

I promised I would. The bidding started at \$1.00; I raised it to \$5.00; it went to \$10.00; I raised it to \$15.00; it went to \$20.00; I raised it to \$25.00; when the bidding stopped.

The young lady turned to me again and called out, "Sold!"

I handed her the money and she placed the doll in my arms.

"Thank you ever so much, Mr. Harris."

That young lady was Miss Pickford herself.

CHAPTER XIX

Shop-Talk

Theatrical Managers and Others Who Tried Their Hand at Music-Publishing—Why They Failed—Fake Publishers and Tricky Song Writers—Cases of Plagiarism, Real and Alleged—Hints to Song Writers.

THESE are many theatrical managers, as well as newspaper proprietors and motion-picture producers, who at one time or another have been under the impression that the music-publishing business is a cinch,—that all one has to do is to round up a few composers, procure some songs, and enter the field, when the dollars will start rolling in. This reminds me of the well-known fact that a tragedian is always anxious to play comedy and the comedian has a similar yearning to do tragedy. But, as the good old saying goes: "Shoemaker, stick to your last." That it certainly is good advice in the present instance, the following examples will prove.

Among the first well-known managers who took the plunge into music-publishing were Weber and Fields, under the name of Weber and Fields Music Publishing Company. This concern lasted about six months. When I asked my little friend Joe We-

After the Ball

ber why he discontinued the publishing business, he said:

"When I walked into our office and saw my partner, Lew Fields, trying to teach a soubrette one of our compositions—and you know the kind of a voice Lew has—the idea struck me as being ridiculous. I felt that Weber and Fields, with their reputation, could not afford to have one of the partners stand there teaching a soubrette, getting no more than thirty dollars a week in burlesque, one of their songs. That night saw the last of the Weber and Fields Music Publishing Company."

The next to follow in their footsteps was a firm which took the name of the Trebus Music Company—a name which, in part, is Shubert spelled backwards. The firm lasted just one year when I bought it out.

Then along came Cohan and Harris, who published Victor Herbert's musical show, "Little Nemo," and several other musical productions. A short time afterward they sold their different operettas to various publishers. I was lucky to buy Victor Herbert's "Little Nemo."

Next followed Hurtig and Seamon, who owned several burlesque theaters and were financially interested in the production of several shows. They also thought they could clean up a fortune. They lasted but a few months.

A few years later George M. Cohan decided to re-

Shop-Talk

enter the publishing business backing William Jerome, the popular song writer, under the name of the William Jerome Music Publishing Company. Billy proved to be a real hustler, publishing several bit hits, one of them by William Rock entitled *Mississippi*. During the World War George M. Cohan wrote the big song-hit *Over There*. George received an offer of \$25,000 from the Leo Feist Company for the song outright, which he accepted; and that deal put the William Jerome Music Publishing Company out of business.

Then came the multimillionaire newspaper owner, William Randolph Hearst, who thought the music business needed his capital as well as his personal attention. So the Hearst Music Publishing Company was born. Even with Mr. Hearst's advertising facilities, which we all know are enormous, the company was not a success. Mr. Hearst was shrewd enough to know that song-hits were few and far between. A short while afterward his company discontinued business.

A big motion-picture producer, Mr. Carl Laemmle, who had made and is still making all his money out of motion-picture production, had an idea that he could show the music publishers how to popularize and handle sheet music. I will give him credit—he opened up in a blaze of glory, advertising in all the dramatic and music-trade papers, spending a small fortune, but all to no avail. Within a year,

After the Ball

after a great many lawsuits over songs claimed by others and numerous other troubles, Mr. Laemmle found that he was out of his element. He was swamped, and this company, too, went by the boards.

A great many actors and song writers have also caught the publishing fever. They thought they could get rich by publishing their own compositions. Among them we have Charles B. Ward, an actor, singer, and song writer, who opened up under the name of Charles B. Ward Publishing Company. He published a big hit of his own, entitled *And the Band Played On*. With the money from this song he started to exploit a dozen other numbers, all of which flopped one by one, and Charles was wiped out.

Jack Norworth, a very fine dancer, singer, and writer, founded the Norworth Publishing Company, spending all the money he earned on the stage in his music business. Unable to stand the strain, he passed out of the picture.

Then along came Bernard Granville, another excellent singer, dancer, and comedian, who opened the Bernard Granville Music Company with a great flourish. Bernie, as he was affectionately called by his friends in and out of the profession, had a big following, and many introduced his songs on the stage to please him, but all to no avail. The company soon went out of business.

Gus Edwards, the well-known composer of *Tam-*

Shop-Talk

many, *School Days*, and a dozen other song-hits, tried his hand at the song-publishing game. Gus certainly was a hustler, just as he is today. Morning, noon and night he used his best efforts to put his company on the map, and when it looked as though he had succeeded, all at once it burst like a balloon in the air. Edwards wisely went back to producing his own shows, and is now making a success of it.

Then we have one of our best singing comedians, Harry Cooper, who toured the country for many seasons with "The Avon Comedy Four," and who has now given up acting for the insurance business. The Cooper Publishing Company made quite a flash. Everything looked good for a time, but before long both the songs Cooper published and the company he organized passed into oblivion.

Joseph E. Howard, the well-known composer of musical comedies and many popular song-hits, thought he would take a hand at the game. Joe opened in Chicago, under the banner of the Joe Howard Publishing Company. He lasted just about four weeks.

Then one of our best-known singing comediennes, who is very popular in both musical comedy and vaudeville, and who has written several songs, made up her mind to make some easy money. Soon the news was heralded in the dramatic papers that a new publishing concern had arisen—the Emma Carus Publishing Company. Emma came to see me soon

After the Ball

after at my office in New York. When I asked her how she was getting along, she said: "Charlie, I am too busy to attend to it all. •What will I do with the company and the songs that I have published, now that I have them ready?" I agreed to take over her entire catalogue on a royalty basis.

Along came Horwitz and Bowers, the authors of the two well-known ballad hits, *Always* and *Because*. With the money they had secured from these songs, they opened an office in New York. Six months later both boys were back in vaudeville, sadder but wiser.

The Rogers Brothers, who were famous German comedians in their day, published all the compositions of their various shows, which were written by Maurice Levi. With the death of Gus Rogers their music business came to a sudden end.

H. W. Petrie, who wrote several song-hits, among them *I Don't Want to Play In Your Yard*, thought it was time for him, too, to get into the music-publishing game. He opened in New York and lasted until his money gave out. Petrie went back to his home in Minneapolis, with a poor opinion of the music-publishing business.

Wolfe Gilbert and Anatol Friedland, two well-known song writers, pooled their efforts and, with Max Silver as their manager, also took a plunge into the deep. For a year they kept swimming along very nicely, and their success seemed assured, when

Shop-Talk

suddenly they, too, went under like all the rest. Gilbert is now with Leo Feist, and doing well, while Anatol Friedland is making good money playing vaudeville with a musical review. Shortly after, two other vaudevillians, Kalmer and Puck, also took a crack at music-publishing, and met a similar fate.

Now, you may ask, what is the reason for all the failures in the music-publishing business. My opinion is that song writers are born, not made, and it is a well-known fact that musicians and song writers make poor business men.

Few men are living today who can pick hits. I would be willing to pay \$50,000 a year salary to any man who would work for me and do just that one thing—pick sure-fire hits. But who can tell what song will go over? There is no song writer who can write hits continuously, nor does any song writer's popularity last very long.

Publishing popular music is one of the most precarious businesses today. In the case of any other line—clothing, jewelry, haberdashery, furniture, etc.—the business can always be turned over and the original investment realized; but a popular song, once dead, is as dead as a doornail, and remains only a memory. Occasionally a few copies of an old song are sold; but the days of big sales are over, and no popular-song publisher today can live from the sales of his past successes alone. He must constantly add new numbers to his catalogue. In the publishing

After the Ball

game you start in business every three months. It makes no difference how many hits you have published, the public soon forgets; and if you do not publish or write a new one now and then, they consider you dead. Unless he has written at least one song that the public can never forget, a popular song writer is soon forgotten. There are only a few that I can mention who have written such songs—Paul Dresser, Victor Herbert, MacDowell, and Stephen Foster. These few are perhaps the only ones who will always be remembered.

Harry Askins, who had managed the New York Hippodrome for one season, called to see me at my office one morning. Being busy opening up my mail, I told him to make himself at home until I was through. He picked up a dramatic paper and started to read. At that moment my secretary announced that a gentleman, who would not give his name, wished to see me on an important matter. Mr. Askins asked if he should leave the room. I said that it was not necessary, as I did not think it was anything important. I then told my secretary to show the gentleman in. He came in. He was six feet tall and weighed about 270 pounds. He came to the point immediately:

“My sister is a song writer. She sent you a manuscript six months ago and it was never returned to her. I want it, and I want it quick.”

Shop-Talk

By his looks I saw that he meant business. Harry was quietly laughing behind his newspaper, but it was no joke to me at the time.

"All right," I said. "I will see if I can locate it. Will you please be seated?"

"Not on your life!" said he. "Get a hustle on and find that song."

I surely did. I waded through some fifty manuscripts, perspiration pouring down my face; and as fate would have it, that was the last manuscript in the drawer.

When I handed it to the irate gentleman, he looked it over carefully and said: "That's it. Let me tell you, sir, it's a good thing you found it. Otherwise I would have cleaned up the place with you."—I really believe he would.—"I know you guys," he continued. "You get manuscripts and then take the best parts out of them and use them for your own songs, saying you lost the original manuscripts or that you never saw it. I am wise to your tricks, but I fooled you this time."

"You sure did," said I quietly.

He stumped out of the office; I breathed a sigh of relief, and Askins let out one yell of laughter.

"That's the funniest thing I have ever heard," he said.

"That's nothing," said I, "after you get used to it."

Amateur song writers sometimes have the idea that publishers are crooks, stealing their lyrics and mel-

After the Ball

odies, when the fact is that there is not a first-class publisher in New York who would not be glad if those writers refrained from sending in their manuscripts. Time and time again I have been threatened with lawsuits on account of mislaid manuscripts. There are fake concerns which advertise that they will write a lyric to a melody or a melody to a lyric, print a hundred copies and send them to well-known publishers, who would publish them under a royalty contract. This, of course, is never done, but their gullible victims are sure to be mulcted at the rate of \$30.00 per manuscript. Thousands have fallen for this scheme, until complaints from the victims finally reached the Government, and many of these fake concerns were closed up and the fakers received prison sentences. Nevertheless, like mushrooms, they are still springing up. They keep just within the law, not promising too much. Such amateur writers should send their manuscripts to recognized publishers, at whose hands their songs, if found worthy, will receive proper consideration. If they have any merit, no money is required to have one's songs published, as the publishers assume all expenses and issue bona fide royalty contracts to the song writers. A song that is really good, will sell, and make money for all concerned.

In this connection it should be borne in mind that there were just as many unprincipled song writers as song publishers in those days. There was a trick of-

Shop-Talk

ten played on a music publisher which I am glad to see is now disappearing, owing to the efforts of the Music Publishers' Protective Association and the American Society of Composers, Authors and Publishers.

A writer would frequently sell a song to one publisher and then re-sell it to another. This happened to me while publishing in Milwaukee. A well-known writer brought me the manuscript of a song. I gave him a substantial advance and a royalty contract. After the song was printed and I had advertised it in the dramatic papers, I was surprised to receive a letter from M. Witmark & Sons, New York, asking me to discontinue publishing this song, as they had a prior claim to it. They sent their Chicago representative to see me with the original copyright. When I looked at the copyright, I saw that it was dated six months ahead of mine. I was compelled to destroy the plates and copies and discontinue the number immediately.

The hardest job a judge and jury ever have is to decide a case of song plagiarism. With Victor Herbert and Jerome Kern, I have been called on to determine whether two songs are similar or not. Few judges are musicians; some can scarcely tell one note from another, and are very candid in saying so. The same is true of the average jury. To a publisher who thinks his composition has been stolen,

After the Ball

my advice is: try to settle the case out of court.

As a rule composers are very temperamental, as I have found in my forty years of experience. They are just like children and will fly off the handle at the least provocation.

The moment a new hit appears on the market, they compare it with one of their own compositions, and if there is any similarity in melody, they rush into court over it. The publisher, who is the owner of the copyright, is compelled to go to court and spend time and money in defending what is often a hopeless case. The composer himself may have unconsciously used that same melody at some time or other. Often an air is taken from some old forgotten song written years ago, or it may be the strain of an old opera he has heard which still rings in his ears.

The following is an instance in which I was compelled to go to court to defend a case of real plagiarism.

I sang a song to a well-known ballad singer in my Milwaukee office, entitled *Dear College Chums*. It was the story of three young students who had sworn to meet every twenty years in a certain college town. After the first twenty years the three met and renewed their friendship: when they met twenty years later, there were only two, and the following twenty years left only one of the trio, who himself passed away that very night.

The song delighted this singer, who insisted on my

Shop-Talk

giving him a copy of the lyric, so that he could learn it on his way to New York. He asked me to send him a copy of the song when completed.

Imagine my surprise when, a few months later, I saw advertised in a New York dramatic paper a song entitled *College Chums Forever*, published by Mylls Bros., a new publishing concern that had just opened up in New York. On securing a copy of the song, I found that, though the music was different from mine, the lyric was identically the same.

The singer to whom I had given my lyric claimed it was his property, and he had secured the services of a composer who had set it to music, their joint names appearing on the song.

I immediately wrote to Mylls Bros. explaining the situation and telling them that I would sue them if they continued to publish the song. All I got was the merry ha-ha. That did not deter me in the least, as I knew that if I did not protect my interests in cases of this kind, I might as well retire from the music publishing business.

I came to New York and engaged a firm of well-known lawyers. We haled Mylls Bros. into court, and the jury awarded me full damages. They were compelled to destroy the plates, but I never collected any damages, as the firm went out of business to avoid payment.

For a long time afterwards publishers and writers took very few chances with my publications; so the

After the Ball

expense I had incurred in coming to New York was money very well spent.

A case of similarity in which Victor Herbert and I were called in to testify for the defendant, B. Feldman, of B. Feldman & Co., London publishers, involved the world-famous song, *It's a Long, Long Way to Tipperary*.

A woman living in Wyoming claimed that Mr. Feldman had visited there during a state fair at which she was selling music. She showed Feldman her song and he introduced her to a young clerk, named, she said, Harry Williams. She maintained, too, that Feldman took her song with him to England and had Mr. Williams rewrite it, using her entire chorus.

Mr. Feldman proved that he had never been west of New York. He was compelled to wire Harry Williams, the song writer, who was at that time located in Los Angeles, to come to New York. When Williams faced the woman in court she did not recognize him, because the Harry Williams mentioned as the writer of the song was an Englishman who had never before been in this country. It was a peculiar case.

The strangest part of it all was that, when Victor Herbert was called to the stand and the woman's manuscript was handed to him to sing from, the chorus proved to be exactly like that of Mr. Feldman's song. Mr. Feldman's proving that neither he

Shop-Talk

nor the author had ever met this woman before, naturally, won his case.

This is one of the many instances where tunes are often written that sound alike, two brains having conceived the identical melody. It seems almost an impossibility, but in this instance it was a fact, nevertheless.

Only a short while ago another case of plagiarism interested the music publishing world. That was the case of Fred Fischer, publisher of *Dardenella*, against Jerome Kern, the well-known musical comedy writer, who had written a catchy melody, entitled *Wackie, Wackie*, which became a hit.

Mr. Fischer claimed that Kern's number had been pilfered from his famous song *Dardenella*. Consequently they went to court over it, where a satisfactory compromise was effected.

I recall that many years ago I wrote a song called *School Bells*. I sent for my arranger and put it in manuscript form for publication. After I had sung the song for him, he started to laugh.

"Stop a moment, C. K." said he; "you cannot use that melody."

"Why?" said I.

"My boy, you will be the laughingstock of the country. The entire chorus of that song is taken from a selection in '*Pinafore*.'"

And he played the tune on the piano. I found that what he said was true. It seemed that a week before

After the Ball

I had attended a juvenile performance of "*Pinafore*" and, naturally, one of the tunes lingered in my memory.

I believe that there is no composer living today who can stand up and declare that his song is strictly original. It would be folly to do so. I have written more than 500 songs, and I should not be surprised if I had incorporated in a great many of them a strain of some forgotten tune. The strange part of it all is that the popular song that always makes a hit is the tune that sounds familiar, and people wonder where they have heard it before.

In this connection I will add that it is harder for a composer who doesn't play or read a note to lift another's melody than it is for a composer who is a real musician. The latter can play over a great many of the old opera scores and appropriate a melody. This has been done time and time again.

Now that I have touched upon the subject, it may not be out of place to say a few words here for the guidance of those who would submit songs to a publisher. The song being completed in lyrics, melody, and accompaniment, the writer of the lyrics and the composer should confer together, play the song over on the piano and see that the words in meter, feet—number of syllables—and accent fit the melody throughout, naturally and correctly, and vice versa. A well-written song must fit both ways. If there are any obvious defects, study them carefully and find

Shop-Talk

a means of eradicating them. Haste and impatience should never be allowed to influence the mind of the song writer who seeks success.

If possible, have your song tried out or sung at some public entertainment or concert, where you can hear it sung by others. You will then see how the song goes on its own merits. In this way some hitherto unseen or unsuspected defect may be discovered, which can thus be corrected before the song goes to the printer or publisher. Remember that when your song is published and placed on sale, it is too late to change it, unless you do it very quickly and are willing to go to much extra expense. Be sure, therefore, that the song is as good as you can possibly make it in all respects before it leaves your hands.

Never let your song be printed or presented to an artist or a responsible publishing house unless the manuscript copy of the music is written in ink, in a good legible hand, and arranged by a first-class arranger, for a poorly written manuscript is always greatly handicapped. An extra typewritten set of the words should always accompany your complete manuscript when it is sent to artist, publisher, or manager. *Never send your original copy to anyone.* Have several copies made, so that if for any reason a manuscript is lost or not returned promptly, you are able to continue your promotion of the song by the use of your other copies.

If the author and composer feel that they are not

After the Ball

prepared to publish and handle their composition personally, there is always the other medium—the regular publisher of music.

In that case, the usual course to pursue in the case of an unpublished manuscript is to place it with a publisher on a royalty basis. If the song proves successful, this arrangement always turns out much more satisfactory to the author financially.

Royalty, it should be explained, is a certain stipulated percentage given the owner or owners of a manuscript on all sales of the composition during the life of the copyright, which is twenty-eight years from the date of copyright and which can be renewed for another twenty-eight years. Of course, copies issued by the publisher as new issues—that is, copies sent to the trade—at a very low price as a means of introducing the song, as well as copies distributed to professional singers, soiled copies, and so on—are not included in the number on which royalty is paid. It is needless to say that a reliable publisher—and there are many such nowadays in New York City and throughout the country—invariably exercises a judicious control over the circulation and disposition of copies on which there is no royalty.

By placing your composition with a music publisher you are relieved of all expense and risk, while much time that would otherwise be devoted to its promotion and sale is saved. The publisher, on acceptance of your composition, assumes entire control of

Shop-Talk

it and everything connected with it, from the time of its acceptance to the day on which it appears on the market. Having at his command countless channels and avenues for its exploitation and sale, the publisher is in a far better position to promote the success of a good composition than any private individual.

Royalty contracts offered by representative publishers differ in many minor points, but all their general features are nearly always alike.

The two chief points to be considered when a contract is submitted for one's signature are:

(1) The amount of royalty offered and (2) a time limit for the publication of 'regular copies—that is, the copies offered for sale—which must be definitely set, so that if the composition is not published within the period stipulated (six months usually) the owner of the manuscript is at liberty to dispose of it elsewhere, the copy being returned to him on demand.

Two cents per copy is the usual royalty rate on all popular songs sold at the regular price, the amount being divided equally between the author and composer. On an interpolated number in a musical comedy, even though it be a popular song, the rate is three cents a copy. On regular musical-comedy numbers written specially for a particular musical show, the royalty rate ranges from three to six cents a copy, to be equally divided between author and composer. Statements of royalties are usually rendered every

After the Ball

six months and are computed from January first to July first.

When a composition is placed with a publisher on a royalty basis, the latter invariably demands a transfer of a sole right to the copyright of the composition. Occasionally a composition is bought outright by the publisher. When such an arrangement is made, the author and composer are required to sign a bill of sale or an assignment paper. In this they release all their right, title and interest in the composition to the publisher or purchaser.

No reliable publisher will accept your manuscript if he does not think there is a reasonable chance of success for it. Of course, success for the publisher means financial success for you, too. Incidentally I might add that one's reputation will be of no avail to him if the quality of his work does not at all times back it up. It is far better to write two or three songs that are really good and novel in every way than to turn out an endless number of but mediocre quality.

To those who would become song writers I offer the following advice: Watch your competitors. Note their success or failure; analyze the cause of either and profit thereby. Take note of public demand. If you do not feel competent to write or compose a certain kind of song, stick to the kind you are sure of, and gradually adapt yourself to the other,

Shop-Talk

if possible, before publicly presenting your work.

Avoid slang and vulgarism; they never succeed.

Many-syllabled words and those containing hard consonants, wherever possible, must be avoided.

In writing lyrics be concise; get to your point quickly, and then make the point as strong as possible.

Simplicity in melody is one of the great secrets of success.

Let your melody musically convey the character and sentiment of the lyrics.

When writing popular songs always bear in mind that it is to the masses, the untrained musical public, that you must largely look for support and popularity. Therefore, do not offer them anything which in subject or melody does not appeal to their ear. To do that is just so much time thrown away.

When you visit or write to a publisher don't worry him with a history of what you have written or accomplished. He cares nothing about that; for, no matter how many successes you may have had or how popular your name may have become, if the composition you offer does not possess the merits the publisher considers necessary, your former successes will not make your present offering of any greater value than if it were the work of an utterly unknown writer.

If a publisher tells you coldly that he cannot use your composition, do not feel or show that you are hurt; and never make the foolish mistake of telling

After the Ball

him that he evidently does not know a good composition when he sees one. Even if a particular publisher should seem to be so unfortunate, remember that he is the purchaser and has to invest the money. It is therefore his privilege to accept or reject a given composition; it is his judgment that counts and nobody else's. Always be gracious and polite, for one can never tell how soon he may need someone's interest and good will in some other connection.

Don't think everything you write is a sure hit. Neither you nor anyone else can know the outcome until the public pronounces its verdict.

Don't let your vanity get the better of you. Often an outside suggestion, properly considered, will prove invaluable.

Don't get too easily discouraged. If at first you don't succeed, try again.

Don't give up pushing your song until it has had every chance. Remember that, though you or your immediate friends may have grown tired of it through familiarity, there are thousands and thousands to whom it is still a novelty.

Don't, when your name at last appears on the title page of a piece of music, sit all day admiring it. Get out and hustle. Let others do the admiring. It is much more effective.

If you desire to copyright your own composition or any other piece of music, address a letter to the

Shop-Talk

Librarian of Congress, Copyright Office, Washington, D. C., and request him to mail you one or more application copyright registration blanks, which he will send you free of charge. Directions for filling out application blanks, with fullest information on how to proceed to obtain correct copyrights for your compositions, will be found on the back of the blank. The entry fee for a composition is fifty cents; the certificate fee is fifty cents extra. In addition to the necessary fee, the law explicitly requires the transmission of two printed copies of the title, which must be sent with the application in order to insure entry of copyright. If a typewritten title is sent, it will be used, but at the applicant's own risk. No entry can be made upon a written title.

Copies of the blank application forms can be obtained as stated above, and requests for them should be made in separate communications, not as part of a letter relating to other copyright business. Remittance should always be made by money order, express order, or bank draft. Currency or coin should never be sent, and checks only on special arrangement with the register of copyrights. Postage stamps should under no circumstances be sent for copyright fees.

The fee for registration of the copyright is two dollars, with an additional fee of one dollar for a certificate of registration.

The copyright for Canada can also be obtained by

After the Ball

writing to the Commissioner of Patents, Copyright Office, Ottawa, Canada, who will be pleased to send applications for registration of copyright on any published work.

The copyright for England can best be obtained through some well-known publisher in London, to whom complete copies of your song, together with the exact date of the proposed American copyright, should be furnished, making the necessary allowance of two or three weeks for foreign mail.

One can copyright only in the countries that belong to the Berne Convention. Consequently, if copyright is obtained in Canada, England, and the United States, one's work will be fully protected.

The new copyright law passed in 1909 allows the owner of the copyright a royalty of two cents on each record sold. For a music roll containing both words and music the royalty rate is four cents a roll. For an interpolated number in a musical comedy, the royalty is six cents per roll.

Special arrangements are usually made with the publishers and writers for mechanical royalties, which range from twenty-five to fifty per cent. It is up to the writers of songs, therefore, to ask what they think they should receive.

The burning question of today is how the radio will affect the composers in the future. Will it help to popularize or will it destroy a song? Time alone can tell.

CHAPTER XX

Past, Present and Future

My Last Year's Experiences—My Ambitions for the Future

THE last year has been spent mostly in writing movie scenarios and in patenting a card holder for using in playing pinochle, rummy and stuss. I also added a few new songs, words and music, to my credit.

Three of my latest scenarios are now being presented by Warner Brothers—*The Tie That Binds*, *The Bridge of Sighs*, and one now being filmed, starring Irene Rich, *Silken Shackles*. Then there was *The Barker*, starring Lew Fields. And *Hearts of Men*, with Arthur Donaldson and Beulah Pointer. *Ashamed of Parents* and *Slim Shoulders*, starring Irene Castle, also *When It Strikes Home*.

The Animated Cartoons, in the "Out of the Inkwell" series, made a film from three songs published by the Charles K. Harris Publishing House. These three songs were *Mother, Mother, Mother, Pin a Rose on Me*, by Bob Lewis, Paul Shindler and Bob Adams; *Come Take a Trip In an Airship*, by George Evans; and *Goodbye, My Lady Love*, by Joseph E. Howard.

After the Ball

The Scenarios that I have finished are *The Bum*, *Fools in Bohemia*, *A Woman Without a Heart*, *The Wasters*, *Wanted: A Thrill*, *Hearts Aflame*. They will probably all be filmed sometime in the next year or so.

In addition to the scenarios, I have written two plays. One is *The Scarlet Sisters*. The other is to be played this summer in Milwaukee by the Davidson Stock Company, who first played my *Don't Weaken*. The name of this play is *What's the Matter with Julius?*—and ought surely to give *Abie's Irish Rose* a run for its money.

My new songs are: *I Knew*; *Danger in Your Eyes*; *No One to Kiss You Good Night*; *Iola* (*Pearl of the Southern Seas*); *Without You*.

I invented my card holder because I grew tired of fighting with David Warfield every time we played pinochle. It made no difference when or where we played, or how clean and new the card deck was—I would accidentally tip up the corners and see what was underneath.

Then I made my holder, and there were no more arguments. The holder keeps the corners down, no matter what happens, and keeps the cards clean as well. I'm going to manufacture them very soon, and I know every good pinochle player will want one once he sees it work.

I came up on the train from Washington, not a

Past, Present and Future

IOLA

(Pearl Of The Southern Seas.)

By CHAS. K. HARRIS

Moderato. (Spanish Guitar effect.)

f *fz* *fz* *fz* *fz*

I - o - la

wait a while, down by the South Sea Isle, I will come

fz *fz* *fz* *fz*

After the Ball

back to thee, — And we shall hap - py be, — I - o - la

once a gain, — You'll sing your sweet re - frain, — 'Twill ease my

heart of pain, — I - o - la dear, I - o - la dear! Pearl of the

Past, Present and Future

South-ern Sea, — Light of my life to me, — For you I

al - ways pine, — Love di-vine, — Sweet-heart mine. — Your slen-der

form I'll press — With lov-ing ten-der-ness, — I'm com-ing

back to thee, I . o . la of the Sea. — Down where the

After the Ball

Palm-trees grow I - o - la waits I know For one who

loves her so with heart that's all a-glow. Dear love, I'll

soon re-turn Be-cause my heart does yearn, With love for

you 'twill burn I - o - la dear, I - o - la dear

Past, Present and Future

long time ago, with Harry Von Tiltzer and Senator Harrison. Von Tiltzer and I were playing pinochle while the Senator looked on. He told me afterward that it was the most ingenious device he had ever seen.

I'm going into vaudeville. I have already played in several eastern cities and at the Hippodrome in New York. I shall start for the West very shortly. After I have made all the circuits through the United States, I'll try Europe. Perhaps I'll go through the *movie* theatres, too. I went to the new Fox Theatre in Philadelphia and was given a royal welcome. When my songs were flashed up, the audience joined in enthusiastically. And the orchestra, which has never before been allowed to do anything so undignified, sang along as loud as the rest of us.

At the Hippodrome it was the same way. Six thousand people took up my refrains and drowned me out. I didn't have to do any work myself!

A great many people have asked me why I have gone into vaudeville. The reason is very simple.

The Music Publishers Association, of which I serve on the board of Governors, and the Society of American Authors and Composers, of which, as I have already mentioned, I am secretary and also one of the board of Governors, have been for a long time decrying the terrible lyrics that constitute the popular jazz songs of the last few years. They have had

After the Ball

an ambition to exploit real, clean, home songs and bring back the ballad where it used to be. They urged me to do this—with the vaudeville stage as the logical place to reach the masses.

I liked the idea. And here I am, hard on the job. If you know my songs, you know I have never in my life written any vulgar stuff. Most of my compositions are sweet simple love ballads. And it has been proved through the years that it's the clean songs that are never forgotten. All the rest pass on.

In my vaudeville act, I introduce several of my best-known songs of past years, and then sing one or two new ones. When I've got the audience entirely with me, I give them a little speech, telling them why I am doing what I am, and what I hope to accomplish by it. You should hear the applause! Evidently there are more people than one realizes who have a hankering for the old-time stuff.

It may take me a year, two years, or three years to accomplish my ideals. But I'm going to stick right at it till I come through.

And now, kind friends, who have followed me through this story of forty years of melody, I hope you have had as much enjoyment in reading my memoirs as I had in writing them. And if my simple, home-loving ballads have brought just a bit of sunshine into your lives, I shall feel that I have not lived my life nor spent my efforts in vain.

My Own Songs

The following is a partial list of my own songs—
words and music:

After the Ball
Always in the Way
Break the News to Mother
Better than Gold
Cast Aside
For Old Time's Sake
Fallen by the Wayside
For Sale a Baby
Hello, Central, Give Me Heaven
I'm Trying So Hard to Forget You
I'm Wearing My Heart Away For You
I've A Longing In My Heart For You, Louise
In the City Where Nobody Cares
Don't You Wish You Were Back Home Again?
'Mid the Green Fields of Virginia
Just Behind the Times
Nobody Knows, Nobody Cares
Just A Gleam of Heaven in Her Eyes
One Night in June
No Flag Like the Red, White and Blue
All for the Love of a Girl
There's Another Picture in My Mamma's Frame
What Does the Flower Say?
You Never Spoke to Me Like that Before
Dear College Chums

After the Ball

*Don't Blame Me for Lovin' You
Tell Me a Beautiful Story
Take Me In Your Arms Again
Love O' Mine
Thou Shalt Not Steal a Heart Away
You Came, You Saw, You Conquered
You Kissed Me and Said Goodbye
Will You Be True?
When the Cherry Trees are Blooming in Japan
Let Him Miss You Just a Little Bit
Mississippi Twilight
Baby's Eyes
I Long For You Tonight
I'm Coming Back To You
When the Golden Leaves Are Falling
All I want is a Cottage, Some Roses and You
School Bells
Give Back my Sweetheart to Me
Come Back Let's Be Sweethearts Once More
Without You
Danger in Your Eyes
Songs of Yesterday
I've Just Come Back to Say Goodbye
I've Been Faithful to You
Is Life Worth Living?
I Used To Know Her Years Ago
In Dear Old Fairyland
In the Good Old-Fashioned Way
Just One Kiss
Just Next Door
Just Because I Loved Her So*

My Own Songs

Mud-Pie Days

On the Sands at Night

Sitting by the Kitchen Door

Can You Pay for a Broken Heart?

I Want to Buy a Little Bit of Love

'Scuse Me Today

Baby Hands

When Did You Write to Mother Last?

I Wonder Who's Next In Your Heart

Will I Find My Mamma There?

Dreaming Love of You

Always Me

'Mid the Blue Grass of Kentucky

Down in the Vale of Shenandoah

In the Hills of Old Carolina

I Love Her Just the Same

It Might Have Been

I Love You in Spite of All

Was I a Fool?

Kiss and Let's Make Up

Last Night As the Moon Was Shining

The Girl of My Dreams

My Virginia

The Best Thing in Life

The Tie that Binds

Without Your Love, Ah, Let Me Die

What is a Home Without Love?

Why Don't They Play with Me?

A Rabbi's Daughter

Belle of the Ball

Can Hearts So Soon Forget?

After the Ball

Fifty Years Ago
Farewell! Sweetheart May
Hello, Central, Hello!
Somewhere
The Last Farewell
There'll Come a Time
Would You Care?
While the Dance Goes On
Will the Roses Bloom in Heaven?
You'll Never Know
Creep, Baby, Creep
When It Strikes Home
My Mamma Lives up in the Sky
Suppose I Met You Face to Face
No one Else Can Take Your Place
Climb a Tree With Me
Not till Then Will I Cease to Love You
No one to Kiss You Good Night
Without You
I Knew
My Mother's Kiss (The Sweetest Kiss of All)
They Don't Want Me Back Home Again
Would You Tell?
Mary Ann, Hollywood Is Calling You

THE END

